RULES
OF
DISCIPLINE.

QUAKER
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.P55
1886

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Walter Ferris.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE

OF THE

YEARLY MEETING

OF

MEN AND WOMEN FRIENDS,

HELD IN PHILADELPHIA.

STEREOTYPED FOR THE YEARLY MEETING.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED BY DIRECTION OF THE REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE
OR MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.
1886.

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It is necessary to observe that the dates in this edition denote the years in which those portions were issued or altered by the Yearly Meeting; where no dates are affixed, the paragraph stands as in the edition of 1806.

INTRODUCTION.

As it hath pleased the Lord in these latter days, by his spirit and power, to gather a people to himself; and, releasing them from the impositions and teachings of men, to inspire them with degrees of the same universal love and good-will by which the dispensation of the gospel was ushered in,—these have been engaged to meet together for the worship of God in Spirit, according to the direction of the holy Lawgiver; as also for the exercise of a tender care over each other, that all may be preserved in unity of faith and practice, answerable to the description which He the ever-blessed Shepherd gave of his flock, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." John xiii. 35.

For this important end, and as an exterior hedge of preservation to us, against the many temptations and dangers, to which our situation in this world ex-

poses us, the following rules have been occasionally adopted by the Society, and now form our code of discipline. In the exercise whereof it is to be observed, that if any member be found in a conduct subversive of its order, or repugnant to the testimonies which we believe we are intrusted with for the promotion of Truth in the earth, it becomes our indispensable duty to treat with such, in meekness and brotherly compassion, without unnecessary delay or improper exposure; according to the direction of our Lord to his church, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen-man and a publican." Matt. chap. xviii. 15, 16, 17.

This is the extent of the Society's censure against irreclaimable offenders, they are disowned as members of our religious community; which is recommended to be done in such a disposition of mind, as may convince them, that we sincerely desire their recovery and restoration, "considering ourselves, lest we also be tempted." Gal. vi. 1.

For the more regular and effectual support of this order of the Society, beside the usual meetings for the purpose of Divine worship, others are instituted subordinate to each other; such as, *First.* Preparative meetings; which commonly consist of the members of a meeting for worship. *Second.* Monthly meetings; each of which commonly consists of several preparative meetings. *Third.* Quarterly meetings; each of which consists of several of the monthly meetings. And *Fourth.* The Yearly Meeting, which comprises the whole.

These meetings have all distinct allotments of service. And as experience shows that when this service is attended to in uprightness, and dedication of heart, with a single eye to the honour of our Holy Head, and the help and edification one of another, in the love wherewith he has loved us, our assemblies are often favoured with his aid and direction,—Friends are affectionately desired and exhorted to be diligent in the attendance of them; and when met, humbly seek to be clothed with the spirit of wisdom and charity. This will divest the mind of a dependence on our own strength and abilities, endue us with patience and condescension towards each other; and, being preserved in fellowship, agreeably to our Lord's declaration, "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," a qualification will be experienced in

our several stations and movements, to build up one another in that faith which works by love to the purifying of the heart.

So may we be living members of the Church militant on earth; and inhabitants of that city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder the Lord is; knowing indeed with exceeding joy, that great is He the Holy One of Israel in the midst of her.

RULES OF DISCIPLINE.

NOTE.—The words Preparative, Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings, as used in these Rules, refer to both men's and women's meetings.

APPEALS.

Notice to monthly meeting.

IF any are dissatisfied with, or think themselves aggrieved by the judgment of a monthly meeting, they may, after a copy of the testimony is delivered to them, notify the first or second meeting (but no other) of their intention of appealing to the ensuing Quarterly meeting: which notification the monthly meeting should enter on the minutes, and appoint a Committee of four or more suitable Friends to attend the Quarterly meeting with that, and copies of the minutes of the monthly meeting, relative to the case, signed by the clerks; there to show the reasons whereon that judgment was founded, and submitting it to the said meeting. The Quarterly meeting is then to refer the same to a suitable committee of Friends (omitting those of the monthly meeting from which the appeal comes) and to confirm or reverse the said judgment, as, on impartial deliberation, shall appear to be right, taking care to inform the parties of the result.

Monthly meeting action.

Quarterly meeting action.

Yearly Meeting action.

If such appellant is dissatisfied with the judgment of a Quarterly meeting also; and, on being informed thereof, shall notify that or the next (but not afterwards) of his or her intention to apply to the Yearly Meeting for a further hearing, the said Quarterly meeting, after recording such notification, is in like manner to appoint at least four suitable Friends, to attend the Yearly Meeting with copies of the records of both the monthly and Quarterly meetings in the case, signed by their clerks. Here it is to be finally determined, and a copy of the determination is to be sent to the meeting from which the appeal came. (1877.)

ARBITRATIONS.

If occasions of differences arise between any of our members about their property, it is recommended that the parties proceed in the following manner:

Mode prescribed for settlement of differences.

Let the party who thinks him or herself aggrieved, calmly and kindly request the other to comply with the demand; and, if this be disputed, the complainant, or if he or she lives at too great a distance, some Friend whom

they may authorize, should take with him or her one or two of the overseers, or other discreet Friends, and in their presence repeat the demand.

Reference to arbitration advised.

If this step also fails of the desired effect, the parties should be advised to choose a suitable number of Friends as arbitrators, and mutually engage by bond, or other written instrument adapted to the occasion, to abide by their determination.

Duty of arbitrators.

Should this proposal be acceded to, and arbitrators accordingly chosen, they ought, as speedily as circumstances will admit, to appoint time and place, and attend to the business without unnecessary delay; giving the parties a fair and full hearing in the presence of each other, but listening to neither of them apart, nor suffering their own sentiments to be known abroad till they have fully digested the subject, and come to a clear decision; which they should be careful to do within the time agreed on.

Either party not complying to be complained of to the monthly meeting.

But, if either of the said parties shall refuse to submit the matter in dispute to arbitrators, or, when that is done, neglect to give his or her attendance when desired, without a sufficient reason being assigned, or not abide by their award when issued; in either of those cases, the offender should be complained of to the

monthly meeting of which he or she is a member; and, if they cannot be brought to a sense of their error, the said meeting should declare its disunion with them; unless such person make it evident to the satisfaction of the said meeting, that the award is erroneous or unjust. In which case, the matter in dispute may be referred either to the same, or other arbitrators, as the meeting shall judge best; and their award shall be final. After which, if either of the parties at variance, prove so regardless of peace and unity as not to acquiesce in such corrected determination, the monthly meeting they belong to should proceed to issue a testimony against him or her so refusing.

An erroneous or unjust award cause of rehearing.

Parties not acquiescing to be disowned.

Where arbitrators are at a loss for want of legal knowledge, it may be proper for them, at the joint expense of the parties, to take the opinion of counsel learned in the law, in order to come at a proper judgment in the matter referred to them. And that they may the better answer the end of their appointment, and be helpful in conciliating the minds of the parties, they ought not to consider themselves as advocates for those by whom they are chosen, but as Friends whose duty it is to judge righteously, fearing the Lord. They should, as much as may be, shun all previous information respecting the case; or, having heard any thing on it, stand unbiassed thereby. They

Arbitrators may consult counsel.

Should be unbiassed.

should reject no evidence or witness proposed, nor receive any but in the presence of both parties; and in their award, they need not assign any reason for their determinations.

Reject no evidence.

And whereas there may be some circumstances even in disputed matters, wherein the foregoing wholesome method of proceeding cannot be complied with; such as, 1st. The party absconding, or leaving the country with design to defraud his or her creditors; or, 2d. That the going through the meetings, by the time it must necessarily take up, might be a manifest damage to the creditor or claimant, by other people's postponing him or her; as in cases of apparent danger of bankruptcy, or the party being overloaded with debts, and other creditors generally coming on; or, 3d. That there may be danger of future damage to such as submit thereto, as in the case of executors, administrators, or trustees. It may therefore be necessary, and it is advised, that the monthly meeting, where such cases happen, do hold excused such as shall in the two first mentioned circumstances in this paragraph, appear to them to be really necessitated to proceed at law: and in the latter case of executors, administrators, or trustees, where it shall appear to the meeting that our friendly way may be unsafe, such may be permitted to have the matter tried at law, with this caution, that

Cases excepted

Permission to have a disputed case tried at law.

the parties on both sides do behave towards each other in love, decency and moderation, without anger or animosity; which will be a becoming testimony even in courts, and show that nothing but the nature of the case, and our station in common with others, under the laws of the land, bring any of us there.

Overseers to consider carefully the nature of complaint.

As it may sometimes occur that a member, either for want of a clear understanding of the business, or through an improper influence, may present a complaint against another member, wherein the overseers, after fully hearing both parties, being decidedly of opinion that the case does not require a reference, they are to advise a speedy settlement thereof; which being ineffectual, and the complainant remaining dissatisfied therewith, may have liberty to inform the preparative meeting where the other party is a member (without mentioning any name) that having a matter in dispute with one of their members, he or she is desirous of their assistance in order to a settlement thereof:—the said meeting is then to appoint a judicious committee to inquire into the propriety of the matter being left to arbitration; if they should judge that the complaint ought to be referred, they are to advise that it be submitted accordingly; but if the said committee concur in judgment with the overseers, the complaint is to be dismissed.

Preparative meeting may be applied to and committee appointed.

It is desired that persons differing about worldly affairs, do as little as may be, engage Friends in the ministry as arbitrators in such cases.

Ministers as arbitrators advised against

BIRTHS AND BURIALS.

As some who attend burials may have to come a considerable distance, and need bodily refreshment, it is earnestly advised, that in making preparations on such occasions, moderation may be observed; and that Friends in all respects demean themselves with gravity. And when the contrary appears, care should be taken, and suitable admonition extended; that every thing tending to lessen the solemnity on such occasions, may be avoided. (1841.)

Moderation advised.

It is recommended, that one or more suitable Friends of each particular meeting, be appointed by monthly meetings to attend at funerals, to see that good order is observed; and that the corpse be removed about an hour after the time set for meeting at the house.

Appointment to see that good order is observed at funerals.

Advised, that Friends be careful themselves, and encourage their families in the mainte-

Christian testimonies to be

maintained.

nance of our Christian testimonies, when attending the burials of those not in communion with us. (1841.)

Meetings at funerals.

In order that meetings may not be held at interments in a customary or formal way, it is advised that the proposal for holding any such meeting, be previously submitted to the consideration of the elders and overseers, or other solid Friends, either of the meeting in the compass of which the deceased resided, or of that in which the interment is to take place,—that the counsel or mind of Truth may be waited for and followed. (1841.)

Appointment to the care of burial grounds.

And to prevent the introduction of improper interments amongst us, it is recommended, that two or more Friends be appointed to the care of our several burial grounds by preparative or monthly meetings, as the case may require; and that no person who is not in membership be buried therein, without a permit in writing signed by one or two of those Friends; who should also take care that our burial grounds be properly enclosed, and kept in decent order.

A pause at the grave.

It is further recommended, that at all interments time be allowed for a solemn pause, both

before and after the corpse is put into the ground.

It is affectionately advised that Friends keep to true moderation in all things appertaining to interments, and that no costly or showy monuments be affixed to graves in any of our burial grounds; or any mark be permitted exceeding six inches in height above the level of the ground, or more than sixteen inches in width and four inches in thickness, with the name and age of the deceased.

Marks allowed of.

Monthly meetings are directed to give the subject particular care and attention, in order that no stone or device should be permitted, or any departure from the rule, allowed of or submitted to, in our burial grounds; and such as are placed already in our burial grounds are directed to be reduced, as early as is conveniently practicable, to the height mentioned. (1852.)

Directions to monthly meetings.

Friends are advised against imitating the vain custom of wearing or giving mourning habits, and all extravagant expenses about the interment of the dead.

Mourning habits, &c.

As great inconvenience may arise from the want of due attention to keeping a regular record of births and deaths, it is earnestly

Record of births and deaths.

enjoined on each monthly meeting, that they appoint a careful Friend, whose duty it shall be, in a book provided for the purpose at the monthly meeting's expense, to keep a record of all births and deaths of members that shall occur within their respective limits, and which shall be offered for that purpose. And in order to engage the attention of monthly meetings more closely to this subject, it is further enjoined, that an explicit answer be annually given by monthly to Quarterly meetings, and through them to the Yearly Meeting, to the query, Whether due care is taken to keep a regular record of births and deaths? (1841.)

The form of the record to be as follows—

BIRTHS.

Names of the children.	When born.	Names of the parents.	Their residence.	Occasional notes.

BURIALS.

Names of the deceased.	When deceased.	Age.	Where buried.	Late residence.	Occasional notes.

BOOKS.

Publication.

It is recommended to the meeting for sufferings to advise or assist any of our members, on their own application, who may incline to publish any manuscript or work which may tend to promote the cause of Truth or be beneficial to society. (1829.) And it is the sense of this Meeting, that if any one shall print or publish any writing which tends to excite disunity and discord among us, such persons should be complained of to the monthly meeting they belong to; and if they cannot be convinced of the impropriety of their conduct, be testified against, as opposed to the peace and good order of the Society.

Writings that excite disunity.

Advice against reading pernicious books.

This Meeting doth earnestly exhort all parents, heads of families, and guardians of minors, that they prevent, as much as in them lies, their children and others under their care and tuition, from having or reading books and papers tending to prejudice the profession of the Christian religion, to create the least doubt concerning the authenticity of the holy Scriptures, or of those saving truths declared in them; lest their infant and feeble minds should be poisoned thereby, and a foundation laid for

the greatest evils. And it is earnestly recommended to every member of our religious society, that they discourage and suppress the reading of plays, romances, novels, or other pernicious books; and printers and booksellers in profession with us, are cautioned against printing, selling, or lending such books; as it is a practice so inconsistent with the purity of the Christian religion. And Friends are desired to be careful in the choice of all books in which their children and families read; seeing there are many under the specious titles of promoting religion and morality, which contain sentiments repugnant to the truth in Christ Jesus.

Against printing selling, or lending such books.

CERTIFICATES.

For travelling Friends to be seasonably returned.

Of removal to be lodged in the monthly meeting and recorded.

It is recommended to the Quarterly and monthly meetings, to take care that all certificates or minutes which may be given to any travelling Friend, be recorded; and upon the return of such Friend, seasonably delivered back to the meeting; and that all certificates of removal brought by any Friend intending to reside amongst us, shall be lodged in the

monthly meeting where the same is accepted; and also that every meeting do keep a copy or record of all certificates which they give out.

All certificates of removal prepared and approved by one meeting must be sent to the other, and if there approved signed by the clerks of both. All certificates received must be read and minuted in both men's and women's meetings. (1877.)

Advice against injudicious change of residence.

Friends are advised to be very cautious in changing their places of residence: it having been observed that the dissolving of old, and the forming of new connections, have in many instances been attended with effects prejudicial to a growth in the Truth and the service thereof, both in the heads and younger branches of families. We therefore recommend to all, that on these occasions a strict attention be paid to the pointings of Divine wisdom; and that, before any determine to change their places of abode, they consult with their experienced fellow-members.

Inquiry before granting certificates.

When a monthly meeting is engaged to prepare a certificate on account of the removal of any Friend to reside within the limits of another monthly meeting, careful inquiry should be made by a committee appointed for that purpose, respecting the situation of his or her temporal affairs, and also, if single, concerning

their situation in relation to marriage engagements; and if on such inquiry no impediment should be found, the certificate should state, that, on inquiry no obstruction appeared relative to his or her outward affairs to the granting a certificate. (1818.)

To be considered as accepted when produced.

It is the judgment of this Meeting, that when a certificate of removal from one monthly meeting addressed to another is produced therein, and it is found that the person or persons recommended reside within the limits thereof, it should be considered as accepted, and the parties members of that meeting. But if any such persons shall fall into circumstances requiring pecuniary relief within one year after the receipt of such certificate, the meeting removed to, ought to assist them, giving speedy notice thereof to the other; whereupon that meeting should immediately take care of them, and repay the charge which has been or may be incurred on that account. But if any Friend be reduced in his or her circumstances by fire or other sudden unavoidable losses, though it may be within one year after their removal as aforesaid, they should be kindly assisted and relieved by the meeting where such persons reside.

Pecuniary relief.

Application to be made for certificates.

All Friends removing out of the limits of their monthly meetings, whether for continuance, or for any considerable length of time,

are advised to apply to their respective meetings for certificates directed to those within which they propose to sojourn or settle. But if any shall remove without so applying, the monthly meetings of which they are members, after the usual inquiry made, and no obstruction appearing, should send certificates for them to the monthly meetings within which they are removed, and that without improper delay. But if their conduct requires their being dealt with, and the distance such as to be inconvenient for the meeting they have removed from, the monthly meeting within which they are, should be requested to treat with him or her thereon, and report the effect of its care. On which, if it proves satisfactory, a certificate of recommendation or removal may be ordered; but if otherwise, and a testimony of disunion is issued, the meeting within which he or she resides, should be furnished with a copy thereof, to be delivered to the party, with information of their right of appeal.

To be sent when not applied for.

Inconvenient meeting with such as have removed at a distance.

It is to be understood that where apprentices, or persons under age, are under a necessity of going from one place to another, their parents or guardians, masters or mistresses, should apply for certificates for them, recommending them to the care and oversight of the monthly meetings whereto they remove.

Apprentices and minors.

If any person appearing as a Friend, come

Appearing as Friends

without certificates and of disorderly conduct, to be treated with.

within the compass of a monthly meeting, not being recommended by certificate, and be of disorderly conduct, the overseers or other concerned Friends should inquire whether or not he or she is a member of our society; and, if they prove so to be, admonish them; or, if the occasion require it, report the case to the preparative, and from thence to the monthly meeting; which should thereupon inform the monthly meeting of which he or she is a member, of the circumstance, and take the direction of said meeting for dealing further with them, according to our rules in cases of that nature.

Visits to such who bring certificates.

It is recommended that monthly meetings, as way may open, appoint two or more Friends to visit such who come recommended by certificate to settle amongst them.

Certificates the property of mo. meetings, and to be seasonably forwarded.

Monthly meetings are advised to take due care that certificates of removal be seasonably forwarded by suitable conveyances to the monthly meetings to which they are directed —they being the exclusive property of such meetings.

Correspondents.

Each Quarterly and Monthly Meeting should appoint a correspondent, to whom certificates or other communications intended for the meeting should be addressed, and whose duty it should be to acknowledge promptly, by letter or otherwise, the reception of such

communications, and also to forward from their respective meetings such papers as may be placed in their charge for that purpose. The name and post-office address of each correspondent to be forwarded annually to the Yearly Meeting, and a full list thereof published in the extracts. (1864.)

CHARITY AND UNITY.

Dissension

It is advised, that where there is any appearance of dissension and variance, or of unkind resentment and shyness among our members, the parties be timely and tenderly apprized of the danger to which they thereby expose both themselves and others, and earnestly exhorted to mutual condescension and forgiveness, becoming the followers of Christ: And if any, notwithstanding such endeavours for their help, continue to manifest an implacable enmity to others, the overseers or other solid Friends of the preparative or monthly meeting they belong to, should be informed thereof, and labour further with them: when, if they still prove inflexible, they ought to be testified against as out of the unity of the body—the very end of whose existence is the promotion of peace on earth, and good-will amongst men.

Implacable enmity.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

Liberty of conscience.

LIBERTY of conscience being the common right of all men, and particularly essential to the well-being of religious societies, we hold it to be indispensably incumbent upon us to maintain it inviolably among ourselves: and therefore advise and exhort all in profession with us, to decline the acceptance of any office or station in civil government, the duties of which are inconsistent with our religious principles; or in the exercise of which they may be, or think themselves to be, under the necessity of exacting of their brethren any compliances against which we are conscientiously scrupulous. And if any persons in membership with us, notwithstanding this advice, shall persist in a conduct so reverse to our principles and religious liberty, it is the sense of this Meeting that they be treated with, as in other cases of offence; and if they cannot be brought to see and acknowledge their error, that the monthly meetings to which they belong should proceed to testify our disunity with them.

Caution respecting offices.

Not to elect members to stations which tend to lay waste our testimonies.

And it is also the sense and judgment of this Meeting, that Friends ought not, in any wise, to be active or accessory in electing, or promoting to be elected, their brethren to such offices or stations in civil government, the execution whereof tends to lay waste our Christian testi-

mony, or subject their brethren or others to sufferings on account of their conscientious scruples.

Peaceable kingdom of Christ

Believing that we are called to show forth to the world in life and practice, that the blessed reign of the Messiah, the Prince of peace, is begun, and we doubt not will proceed till it attains its completion in the earth, when according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Micah, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation neither shall they learn war any more." Influenced by these principles, we cannot consistently join with such as form combinations of a hostile nature against any; much less in opposition to those placed in sovereign or subordinate authority; nor can we unite with or encourage such as revile and asperse them; for it is written, "Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people." Acts xxiii. 5.

Whose subjects cannot join in hostile measures.

CONDUCT AND CONVERSATION.

Faithfulness recommended.

WHATEVER exercises we may meet with on account of a faithful testimony to the Truth in all godliness of conversation; and to the end that we may not faint in our minds, let us con-

sider the Captain of our salvation, who endured the contradiction of sinners, bearing his cross and despising the shame, and is now set down on the right hand of God, where he continually maketh intercession for us—that following him, and under his banner fighting the good fight of faith, we may finally obtain the crown of righteousness which fadeth not away.

Scandalous practices condemned or testified against.

Advised, that such be dealt with who are given to lying, swearing, cursing; men and women unlawfully or unseemly keeping company with each other, or any other scandalous practice; and where any are guilty of gross or notorious crimes, or such other disorderly or indecent practices as shall occasion public scandal,—after being dealt with by the overseers or other concerned Friends, if they are brought to a sense thereof, such offenders ought without improper delay to remove the scandal, and clear, as much as in them lies, our holy profession therefrom, by acknowledging the offence, and condemning the same in writing under their hand, to the satisfaction of the monthly meeting whereto they belong. And where any such offender refuseth so to acknowledge and condemn the fault, the said monthly meeting ought speedily to testify against him or her, and the fact.

Blasphemy, &c. to claim early care.

If any in membership with us shall blaspheme, or speak profanely of Almighty God, Christ Jesus, or the Holy Spirit, he or she

ought early to be tenderly treated with for their instruction, and the convincement of their understanding, that they may experience repentance and forgiveness; but should any, notwithstanding this labour, persist in their error, or deny the divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the immediate revelation of the Holy Spirit, or the authenticity of the Scriptures; as it is manifest they are not one in faith with us, the monthly meeting where the party belongs, having extended due care for the help and benefit of the individual without effect, ought to declare the same, and issue their testimony accordingly.

Persisting therein, or denying the divinity of Christ, cause of disownment.

It is the earnest concern of this Meeting, that in all our dealings and transactions among men, strict justice may be observed; and that no motives of pecuniary interest may induce any of our members to impose on each other, or on their neighbours: and it is desired that monthly meetings may be careful to extend suitable admonition against a spirit of covetousness, and against every appearance of deviation from strict justice in any of our members.

Strict justice in all our dealings to be observed.

Frequent waiting in stillness on the Lord for the renewal of strength, keeps the mind at home in its proper place and duty, and out of all unprofitable association and converse, whether amongst those of our own, or other professions. Much hurt may accrue to the reli-

Waiting in stillness recommended.

Unnecessary conversation on temporal matters discouraged.

gious mind by long and frequent conversation on temporal matters, especially by interesting ourselves unnecessarily in them; for there is a leaven in that propensity, which being suffered to prevail, indisposes and benumbs the soul, and prevents its frequent ascendings in living aspirations towards the Fountain of eternal life.

CONVINCED PERSONS.

Admission into membership

It is concluded that the following order be observed respecting persons who apply for admittance into membership, and request to come under the care of Friends. That they apply to the overseers or elders, who, when they are easy so to do, are to lay it before men's or women's preparative meeting, as the case may be; and, after that meeting is fully satisfied, by paying a solid visit or otherwise, they are to lay the case before the monthly meeting of the same branch; which meeting shall appoint some suitable Friends to inquire into the person's life and conversation, and also to take a solid opportunity of conference with the party, in order the better to understand whether his or her motives for such request be sincere, and on the ground of true convincement; and make

report of their sense of the person's suitableness to become a member: on which, when both meetings are satisfied, a minute should be made, signifying the acceptance of such into membership, and appointing a Friend or two to acquaint the person thereof, requesting his or her attendance at the next monthly meeting.

Caution against haste.

But in all such cases, Friends are exhorted to attend carefully to the advice of the apostle, "Lay hands suddenly on no man." The neglect of such caution having often been injurious both to the individuals and to the Society —to them, by settling them in a false rest; and to the Society, by adding to its numbers, without increasing its joy.

Without respect to nation or colour.

Wherefore, we desire, that on every application of persons to be received into membership with us, monthly meetings may be deep and weighty in their deliberations and result; and, when united in believing that the applicants are clearly convinced of our religious principles, and in a good degree subject to the Divine witness in their own hearts, manifested by a circumspect life and conduct, said meetings are at liberty to receive such into membership, without respect to nation or colour.

Disowned persons received as others (1828.)

And such as may have been disowned, and incline to become members, may be received on their own request as other applicants.

DAYS AND TIMES.

Some reasons for not observing fasts and feast days and times, and other human injunctions and institutions relative to the worship of God.

EVER since we were a people, we have had a testimony against formal worship; being convinced by the precepts of our Lord Jesus Christ, the testimonies of his apostles, and our own experience, that the worship and prayers which God accepts, are such only as are produced by the influence and assistance of his Holy Spirit; we cannot therefore consistently unite with any in the observation of public fasts, feasts, and what they term holy days; or such injunctions and forms as are devised in man's will for Divine worship. The dispensation to which outward observations were peculiar, having long since given place to the spiritual dispensation of the gospel, we believe the fast we are now called to is not the bowing of the head like a bulrush for a day, but an universal and continual fasting and refraining from every thing which has a tendency to defile the soul, and unfit it for becoming the temple of the Holy Ghost; according to the injunctions of Christ to his primitive disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him take up his daily cross

and follow me. Watch ye therefore and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man." That the primitive believers saw an end to these shadows of good things, by coming to Him in whom all figures and shadows end, is evident by the words of the apostle Paul: "For Christ," said he, "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. x. 4. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises." Heb. viii. 6. "Let no man therefore judge you in meat or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." Col. ii. 16, 17. And the same apostle thus expostulated with some who it appears had fallen from the true faith in these respects: "But now after that ye have known God, how turn ye again to the beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days and months, and times, and years: I am afraid of you lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." Gal. iv. 9, 10, 11.

DEFAMATION AND DETRACTION.

Strict vigilance against the spirit of detraction recommended.

FRIENDS are everywhere exhorted to maintain a strict watch over themselves and each other, against the subtle and mischievous spirit of tale-bearing and detraction—the manifest tendency of which is to lay waste the unity of the body, by sowing the seeds of disesteem, strife, and discord among brethren and neighbours; as well as to unfit those who either propagate or listen to evil reports, for being of that service to the persons reflected upon, which they might be if the order prescribed by our blessed Lord to his church, was strictly observed, viz: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that, in the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

Gospel order.

Detractors to be testified against if

It is therefore advised, that in whomsoever this weakness appears, it may be immediately checked; and, if any one gives way to it, to

the obvious injury of another's reputation or interest, let him or her be faithfully admonished; and, if they persist, and cannot be prevailed with to give due satisfaction, the preparative or monthly meeting should be informed of it, and deal further with them; when, if this produce not the desired effect, they should be testified against.

the labor is ineffectual.

And if any member who offends in this respect, shelters him or herself under a pretence that they say no more than they have heard from others, but will not discover who they are,—such reporters or tale-bearers should in like manner be dealt with, and testified against as being themselves the authors.

Hearsay reporters.

DISCIPLINE AND MEETINGS FOR DISCIPLINE.

The institution of our meetings for discipline of both men and women Friends having on experience been found very beneficial, it is earnestly recommended they may be maintained in that authority wherein they were established. Where any have been negligent in attending them, or opposed to their usefulness, carnality and spiritual death have been the consequence.

Connection and subordination of meetings.

The connection and subordination of our meetings for discipline are thus: Preparative meetings are accountable to the monthly; monthly, to the Quarterly; and the Quarterly, to the Yearly Meeting. So that if the Yearly Meeting be at any time dissatisfied with the proceedings of any inferior meeting; or a Quarterly meeting with the proceedings of either of its monthly meetings; or a monthly meeting with the proceedings of either of its preparative meetings—such meeting or meetings ought with readiness and meekness to render an account thereof when required.

To make or alter discipline, men and women to unite.

When it may be thought expedient to make or alter any rule of discipline, the subject shall first claim the attention of a Monthly Meeting of men or women Friends, and in case the proposition should be united with in both branches, it is to be forwarded to the Quarterly Meeting, and when there united with in like manner, be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting of men and women Friends for consideration and approval. (1861.)

Setting up or laying down meetings.

It is agreed, that no Quarterly meeting be set up or laid down, without the consent of the Yearly Meeting; no monthly meeting without the consent of the Quarterly meeting; nor any preparative or other meeting for business or worship, till application to the monthly meeting is first made; and, when there approved, the consent of the Quarterly meeting

be also obtained. Also, that no meeting for worship intended to consist of Friends belonging to two or more monthly meetings shall be set up, until the proposal be offered to and approved by both those monthly meetings, and the consent of their respective Quarterly meeting or meetings be obtained. When the meeting proposed, is opened, it should be attended by a few solid Friends, deputed by each of the said monthly meetings. And, if at any time it is thought expedient that a preparative meeting should be held at the same place, the consent of the said monthly and Quarterly meetings should be, in like manner, applied for and obtained; and the said preparative meeting should be annexed to either one or the other of those monthly meetings, as may be most likely to conduce to the benefit of the individuals who compose it, and the advantage of Society.

Books to be provided for fair record of minutes.

It is directed, that a book be provided by every monthly and Quarterly meeting, and fair minutes be kept therein, of all matters which shall come before and be determined by them. Monthly meetings, particularly, are advised to attend to and finish all such business with care and despatch, that it may, at no time, suffer by improper delay. And if any case under consideration proves too weighty or difficult for them to determine, they should apply to their respective Quarterly meetings

Monthly to apply to Quarterly meetings for assistance.

for assistance; or, if the circumstances are such as to require it, refer it thereto by minute.

Copies of minutes may be granted to meetings.

It is the sense of this Meeting, as a general rule in all cases, that where any monthly or Quarterly meeting has occasion for, and requests copies of any of the papers, minutes, or records of another monthly or Quarterly meeting, the same may accordingly be granted.

And also to persons if Quarterly and monthly meetings approve thereof.

Where any difference happens among Friends, and the same be entered in any monthly or Quarterly meeting book, it is agreed, that if the parties, or either of them, think that copies of such entries may be useful and necessary for them, and request the same, such monthly and Quarterly meetings shall have a discretional power to give or refuse such copies, according to the circumstances and motives attending.

Representatives to the Quarterly and Yearly meetings.

It is agreed, that a suitable number of men and women be appointed in each monthly meeting, to attend the service of the Quarterly meeting, with such reports in writing, signed by their clerks, as may be given them in charge: also, that at least four of each sex be appointed in each Quarterly meeting to attend the Yearly Meeting.

Punctual attendance or

And it is earnestly advised and desired, that all Friends who submit to these, or any other

services of Society, may be punctual in their attendance thereon; or, if prevented by sickness or any other unavoidable occurrence, that they be careful to send information thereof; also, that those who are under appointments to meetings, do not withdraw therefrom before the conclusion, without obtaining the meeting's consent.

reason for absence advised.

And when proposals of marriage are made, if any near relations of the parties (who are not in membership) are permitted to be present, they should withdraw before the meeting proceeds to any other business.

Mode of treating with those who reside at a distance.

It is advised, that if a member under dealing removes into the compass of another monthly meeting; or, if previous to or after such removal, the conduct of him or her has been such as to require their being dealt with—and their residence be at so great a distance as to render it inconvenient for the monthly meeting to which they belong, it should request that into which they are removed, to treat with them according to our rules, and to report the effect of its care; when, if it is satisfactory, the party should be recommended by certificate; or if otherwise, and a testimony of denial is issued, a copy thereof should be sent to the monthly meeting within the limits of which he or she resides, and that meeting is to appoint two or more Friends to inform them thereof, and of their right of appeal.

Minuted offenders not to sit in any meeting for discipline.

After a charge against a member for disorderly conduct is entered on the minutes of a monthly meeting, he or she should not be permitted to sit in any of our meetings for discipline, till the case is issued, and the monthly meeting satisfied.

Official record in men's meeting.

In dealing with offenders, the men's or women's meetings should proceed separately until a judgment is arrived at, when, if the labor shall have been effectual, a minute may be made and the case closed; but if not, it should be presented to the other meeting, that if further labor be thought best it may be jointly proceeded in, and the result united with by both, which result shall be communicated to the individual by the meeting in which the case originated. The names of women who have been dealt with on account of marriage, and retained in membership, are to be reported to men's meeting for OFFICIAL RECORD.

Transgressors admonished.

It is advised, that where any transgress the rules of our discipline, they may, without partiality, be admonished and sought in the spirit of love and Divine charity; so that it may be seen by all, that the restoring spirit of meekness and Christian love abounds, before church censure takes place; and that a gospel spirit is the spring and motive to all our performances, as well in discipline as in worship.

It is earnestly recommended, that in conducting the affairs of the church, Friends endeavour to manage them in the peaceable spirit and wisdom of Jesus, with decency, forbearance, and love to each other.

Suffering cases.

It appearing by the minutes of the meeting for sufferings, that on inspection of some of the accounts of sufferings sent up by the Quarterly meetings, considerable difficulty has been occasioned by those accounts not expressing, with sufficient clearness, what the sufferings mentioned were for; it is now desired that the monthly and Quarterly meetings may in future leave out of their reports any instances which do not appear to be clearly consistent with the sense of this Yearly Meeting; and that they continue to collect and send up their accounts of sufferings annually as heretofore directed; and that they be preserved and recorded agreeably to the practice of our ancient Friends; reciting the sums demanded,—the kind and amount of property taken,—by whom the distraints were made,—and the authority under which the officers acted.

Sent up annually and recorded.

Rights of children defined.

As to the rights of children whose parents have been married contrary to the rules of our discipline, it is agreed, that where either of those parents remain out of membership, their children should not be esteemed members, till application for their admission is made either by themselves or by their parent, parents, or

guardians, on their behalf, and the monthly meeting applied to, on a solid consideration of the case, is easy to admit them or any of them. The rights of children born of parents who have been married according to our rules, or of such children whose parents have both become members, and one of them afterwards disowned, are not intended to be affected by this rule, if a parent of either of those descriptions retains a right of membership at the time of the birth of any such child. (1815.)

Sorcery to be testified against

If any member of our religious society shall apply to those called jugglers or fortune-tellers. or those who by colour of any art or skill whatsoever, pretend to a knowledge of future events, hidden transactions, or where things lost or stolen may be found; or if any of our members shall use, or pretend to such art or skill, it is advised that they be speedily dealt with; and if they do not manifest a due sense of their evil conduct, that they be testified against.

Clerks

A committee should be annually appointed in each of our Quarterly and monthly meetings, for the nomination of clerks; which may afford opportunity for their being seasonably changed, and more of our qualified members exercised in those services.

Service of preparative meetings.

As the use and design of preparative meetings is in general to digest and prepare business, as occasion may require, which may be

proper to be laid before the monthly meeting, Friends ought to be careful therein, not to occasion unnecessary delays, or undertake to decide on any business which claims attention and care in monthly meetings. And when cases are agreed to be carried forward, they should be entered in writing, and some suitable Friend or Friends named to produce them to the monthly meetings; and proper notes thereof should be carefully preserved by clerks of preparative meetings, as to said meetings may appear useful and right. But no preparative meeting shall take cognizance of proposals of marriage, this being exclusively the business of monthly meetings.

Either Men's or Women's Yearly or Quarterly Meeting may communicate to their constituent meetings such advices as they apprehend necessary, with any epistles or writings issued for that purpose; nominate committees to visit their constituent meetings, or for any other service which they may judge expedient; and in all respects they are to attend to those matters which may properly come under their notice and care. (1877.)

DONATIONS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS.

Executors and trustees concerned in wills and settlements, are advised to a faithful and punctual discharge of their respective trusts, according to the intent of the donors and testators; and both they and the meetings concerned in any charitable gifts, legacies or bequests, to take special care that these be not perverted or appropriated to any other uses than such as the donors or testators have directed and enjoined by legal settlement, will, or testament.

FAMILY VISITS.

As the visiting of Friends in their families in the openings of heavenly wisdom, is a service which hath often been blessed to the minds of the visitors and visited, this Meeting hath from time to time recommended it to the solid attention of Quarterly and monthly meetings: and it is desired, that concerns of this nature may be tenderly cherished, and those

who are rightly exercised therein, encouraged to move forward in due season, and in humble dependence on the Shepherd of Israel, who not only puts his own forth, but goes before and rewards all who are faithful to his appointments, with the enriching reward of sweet comfort and solid peace.

GAMING AND DIVERSIONS.

Gaming and evil diversions cause of disownment.

As our time passeth swiftly away, and our delight ought to be in the law of the Lord; it is advised that a watchful care be exercised over our youth, to prevent their going to stage-plays, horse-races, music, dancing, or any such vain sports and pastimes; and being concerned in lotteries, wagering, or other species of gaming. And if any of our members fall into either of these practices, and cannot be prevailed with, by private labour, to decline them, the monthly meetings to which the offenders belong, should be informed thereof; and, if they be not reclaimed by further labour, proceed to testify our disunity with them.

LAW.

If any member is complained of for withholding a just debt, he or she should be tenderly urged to payment; and if this is unavailing, be dealt with as in other cases of disorderly conduct. And if any of our members appear unable to satisfy their creditors, they should be advised to call them together without loss of time; and submit the state of their affairs to their inspection: when, if the creditors apprehend a surrender of the debtor's effects to assignees for the benefit of the whole to be necessary, let him or her be earnestly entreated to consent; and, if they refuse so to do, the monthly meeting should be informed thereof; when, if the party still persists in refusing, he or she should be disowned without too long delay.

Withholding a just debt cause of dealing.

Insolvents to take the advice of creditors.

Refusing cause of disownment.

But if Friends in such difficult circumstances manifest an honest intention, and shall offer their all to their creditors, let compassion and aid be extended to them as brethren, and objects of Christian charity—having done what they can, no more for the present is justly to be expected from them.. Yet it is the judgment of this meeting, that if persons so failing in their circumstances, should at any time

Compassion to honest debtors.

Payment to be made when of ability.

afterwards be favoured with full ability to pay off their deficiencies, justice will require it of them, notwithstanding a composition with, and legal discharge from their creditors may have been obtained. This is however not meant to furnish any with a pretext for advancing such claims, while persons so deficient are honestly labouring to retrieve their circumstances, nor until it shall clearly appear to their respective monthly meetings, or to a solid committee thereof, that a sufficient ability is arrived at; when, if they are requested to comply, and persist in refusing, the said meetings should proceed to disown them.

No undue advantage to be taken of our rules.

And it is desired, that no debtors may shelter themselves under such of our rules, as are designed to guard us against an unkind treatment of each other, unjustly hoping to be thereby put out of the reach of the civil authority.

Suits at law.

And it is the sense of this Meeting, that if any member thereof, disregarding the gospel order prescribed by our discipline, shall arrest or sue at law another member (not being under such a necessity so to do, as may satisfy the overseers or other solid and judicious Friends of the meeting to which the latter belongs) he or she in so doing, doth depart from the peaceable principle we make profession of; and if, on being treated with by the monthly

meeting to which they belong, they cannot be prevailed with to withdraw the suit and pay the costs thereof, they should be disowned.

MARRIAGES. (1842.)

THE Society of Friends have ever regarded the marriage contract as one of a religious nature. It is therefore earnestly and affectionately advised, that our members, previously to making any procedure in this important concern, do seriously and humbly wait upon the Lord for his counsel and direction; and when favoured with satisfactory clearness therein, they should acquaint their parents or guardians with their intentions. Thus, preservation from the dangerous bias of forward and uncertain affections, would be experienced, to the real benefit of the parties, and the comfort of their friends.

Divine counsel to be waited for, and parents informed.

The principles on which the good order in our religious Society, in relation to the accomplishment of marriage, is founded, are,

Firstly. For the preservation of harmony, peace, and unity in families: and, to guard against hasty and improper connections, the

Consent of parents.

consent of parents should be early obtained by the parties.

Care of monthly meetings.

Secondly. That Friends may proceed commendably in this important connection, the proposal of marriage should be laid before the monthly meeting, in order that Friends may extend a watchful care over their members, and see that they are clear of other similar engagements.

Mixed marriages.

Thirdly. To discountenance mixed marriages; or the marriages of our members with those of other principles and professions of religion: because unhappiness is often the result of such connections, and difficulties and embarrassments are liable to ensue in the education of children.

Hireling ministry.

Fourthly. To maintain our testimony against an hireling ministry, by avoiding the assistance of a priest or hireling minister, in accomplishing this solemn engagement.

For the purpose of maintaining these principles and testimonies, it is agreed that the following order be observed in the accomplishment of marriages.

Proposals.

The parties making proposals of marriage are to communicate their intentions to the men's and women's monthly meeting in writ-

ing, signed by them both, in the following manner:

"To the Monthly Meeting of . . . . . Form.
With Divine permission and Friends' approbation, we intend marriage with each other."

Whereupon, if they belong to the same meeting, a committee of men and women Friends should be appointed to make inquiry respecting the clearness of the parties from other similar engagements. If they have parents or guardians, their consent should be expressed in the meeting, or produced in writing, when it is practicable, or may reasonably be obtained. Should the woman be a widow having children, the committee are to see that the rights of the children are legally secured. At the next meeting, if the committee report that inquiry has been made, and no obstruction to the further proceeding appears, the monthly meeting may leave the parties at liberty to accomplish their marriage, according to our order, at a public meeting, or at such other time and place as it may approve; except on the first day of the week; and appoint two Friends of each sex to have the care and oversight thereof. If any member is about to marry without the limits of the monthly meeting of which he or she is a member, care should be taken to procure a certificate from the meeting they belong to, of their

Committee of inquiry.

Consent of parents.

Rights of widows' children legally secured.

Time and place.

Overseers appointed.

Certificate of clearness.

right of membership, and clearness from any other person with respect to marriage; and produce the same to the monthly meeting in which the proposal of marriage is made.

Advised to moderation, &c.

It is affectionately advised, that marriages be accomplished decently, gravely, and weightily; and that the parties themselves, their parents, and others concerned, do take care that moderation be observed, and no reproach arise, or occasion of offence be given; but that all behave with such sobriety as becomes a people fearing God. If any thing to the contrary be observed, the overseers or other concerned Friends present, ought in brotherly love to admonish to a better behaviour. And the said overseers are to make report to the next monthly meeting, whether this advice concerning good order and moderation has been observed, and take care that the marriage certificate be recorded.

Overseers to report.

Form of certificate.

The form of which certificate shall be as follows:

Whereas, A. B. of . . . . . ., in the county of . . . . . ., in . . . . . ., son of C. B. of . . . . . and H. his wife; and D. E. daughter of F. E. of . . . . . and M. his wife, having declared their intentions of marriage with each other, before a monthly meeting of the religious Society of Friends, held at . . . . . ., according to the good

order used among them [*where the parties are under the care of parents or guardians, add*] and having consent of parents or guardians concerned [*as the case is*] their said proposal of marriage was allowed of by the said meeting. Now these are to certify whom it may concern, that for the full accomplishment of their said intentions, this . . . . . day of the . . . . . month, in the year of our Lord . . . . . ., they, the said A. B. and D. E. appeared in a public meeting* of the said Society, held at . . . . . aforesaid; and the said A. B. taking the said D. E. by the hand, did, on this solemn occasion, openly declare, that he took her, the said D. E. to be his wife, promising, with Divine assistance, to be unto her a loving and faithful husband, until death should separate them; and then, in the same assembly, the said D. E. did in like manner declare, that she took him, the said A. B. to be her husband, promising, with Divine assistance, to be unto him a loving and faithful wife, until death should separate them. And moreover, they, the said A. B. and D. E. (she according to the custom of marriage, assuming the name of her husband) did, as a further confirmation thereof, then and there to these presents set their hands.

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* When the marriage is accomplished at a *private house*, instead of the words, "in a public meeting of the said Society, held at . . . . aforesaid," say, "at the house of . . . . in the . . . . . of . . . . ."

And we whose names are also hereunto subscribed, being present at the solemnization of the said marriage and subscription, have, as witnesses thereto, set our hands, the day and year above written.

A. B.
D. B.

No misdemeanor to be treasured up

Advised, that no misdemeanor be treasured up against a person until the time of presenting proposals of marriage, and then started, though perhaps long before done, and known to those who object to it at that time: which is a wrong thing, and should be checked and discouraged in all meetings.

No proposals sooner than one year after death of husband and wife.

No monthly meeting ought to permit any marriage to be proposed in said meeting, sooner than one year after the death of husband or wife.

Consanguinity.

That marriages of persons nearly related by consanguinity, may as much as in us lies be prevented, this Meeting concludes, that no marriage between any so near akin as first cousins shall be permitted amongst us. The term "first cousins" fully applies to every description of grandchildren descended from one common parent.

Improper connections.

It is advised that Friends exercise a religious care in watching over their children, and

endeavour to guard them against improper or unequal connections in marriage; that they be not anxious to obtain for them large portions and settlements; but that they be joined with persons of religious inclinations, suitable dispositions, and diligence in their business: which are necessary to a comfortable life in a married state.

Mixed marriages

In order, as much as may be, to prevent mixed marriages, or the accomplishment of marriages out of our comely order, parents and Friends are tenderly advised to an increasing care of the youth; early to admonish and instruct them in the principles of Truth, by upright example as well as precept; and endeavour to impress their minds with the duty of religiously observing them; as much as possible restraining them from such company as is likely to entangle their affections in an improper manner.

Admonition

Let those of our members be admonished who keep company with persons not of our Society, in order for marriage; or who are present themselves, or consent to their children being present at marriages of those not in membership, which are accomplished by the assistance of a priest or hireling minister.

Mixed marriages

And when any of our members do join in marriage with those of other principles and

and by a priest.

Attending such.

professions of religion; or accomplish their marriage by the assistance of a priest; or are present at the marriage of a member accomplished by the official interference of a priest or hireling minister, they should be treated with in order to convince them of the impropriety of their proceeding; and if not brought to a sense of their deviation, so as to make satisfaction to the meeting, let them be testified against.

Cause of disownment.

Without the approbation of the monthly meeting.

No immoral conduct, &c.

Both members.

If any member of our Society accomplish his or her marriage without the approbation of the monthly meeting, and it should appear by the report of a committee appointed to visit him or her, that no immoral conduct, nor breach of our testimonies has taken place in the accomplishment of said marriage, and that the party is desirous of retaining a right of membership, monthly meetings may be at liberty to retain such member, without requiring a written acknowledgment. But when both parties are amenable to our discipline, and not giving a satisfactory acknowledgment in writing, they are to be testified against as for other breaches of the discipline. (1846.)

First cousins.

It is not intended to leave monthly meetings at liberty to continue those in membership who marry their first cousins, without a satisfactory acknowledgment in writing. (1846.)

One party not in

As there are many persons not in membership with us, who are not of other principles

or professions of religion, but who manifest an interest in the maintenance of our testimonies, it is concluded that, when any such person is about to proceed in Marriage with a member, he or she shall be at liberty to make application to the men and women Overseers of the Monthly Meeting to which the member belongs; when, if the Overseers are satisfied, the proposals of marriage may be laid before the Monthly Meeting in the usual form; and the Meeting shall make inquiry, and have the same care and oversight of the marriage, and proceed in the manner prescribed by Discipline where both are members of the same Monthly Meeting. But these proceedings shall not give a right of membership to such persons or to their offspring. (1866.)

membership

MEETING HOUSES.

Titles to be inspected.

It is recommended to Quarterly and monthly meetings to make timely and careful inspection into the situation of the titles of meeting houses, burial grounds, and other estates which have been vested in trustees, and by them held for the use and benefit of the Society at large, or of any of those meetings; so that if it should appear needful by the death of any such trustees or otherwise, due and seasonable care may be taken to appoint some others to the trust; that future difficulties and the risk of being deprived of such estates may be avoided. And it is further recommended, that Quarterly and monthly meetings respectively as the case may require, keep exact records of all such trusts and conveyances; and also that a clear and regular account be kept by each respective meeting, of the place where, and the persons with whom the papers, minutes and records belonging to our religious society are from time to time deposited; wherein due care should be taken to lodge them with suitable Friends.

Trusts renewed.

Care of papers, minutes, and records.

REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE OR MEETING FOR SUFFERINGS.

(1829.)

Four from each Quarterly meeting.

In order that this Yearly Meeting may be properly represented in the intervals thereof, it is directed that each Quarterly meeting produce, in their reports to the Yearly Meeting annually, the names of four suitable Friends, to constitute together a Representative Committee, or Meeting for Sufferings, to be held and regulated according to the following rules:

Minutes.

First. The said Committee shall keep fair minutes of all its proceedings, and annually lay them before the Yearly Meeting.

Quorum.

Second. No less number than twelve of the members attending, shall constitute a meeting capable of transacting any business.

Notice to be given.

Third. On all occasions of uncommon importance, previous notice thereof shall be given, or sent, to all the members, if practicable.

May sit on its own adjournments.

Fourth. The said Committee may sit on its own adjournments, and order these, as well as the times of its stated meetings, according to the business before them.

The services confided to this Committee, are, in general:

First. To represent this Yearly Meeting during its recess, and to act on its behalf in cases where the welfare of our religious society may render it needful. But it is not to meddle with any matter of faith or discipline.

Not to meddle with faith or discipline.

Second. To procure and distribute such books, or pamphlets, as may be a means of spreading the knowledge of our religious principles or testimonies; and to advise or assist any of our members, on their own application, who may incline to publish any such manuscript or work, as may tend to promote the cause of Truth, or be beneficial to society.

Books.

Assist in publishing.

Third. To render advice and assistance to meetings, at their request, on subjects relating to property, titles to lands, the renewal of trusts, and the application of public gifts and legacies.

Advise meetings as to trusts, &c.

Fourth. To receive from the several Quarterly meetings their annual accounts of sufferings, and also such memorials concerning deceased Friends, as those meetings may have concurred with, that when examined and approved, they may be laid before the Yearly Meeting; or otherwise be returned to the respective Quarterly meetings for their revisal or correction.

Sufferings

Memorials.

Assist members under suffering.

Fifth. To extend such advice and assistance to any individuals under suffering for our testimonies, as their cases may require; and, if necessary, to apply to the government, or persons in authority, on their behalf.

To correspond.

Sixth. To correspond with representative bodies of other Yearly Meetings, as occasions may require, on concerns of general interest to the Society.

Concerned Friends may be permitted to attend.

It is also agreed, that although none are properly members of the Representative Committee, but such as are appointed by direction of the Yearly Meeting as aforesaid, yet that other Friends, at the discretion of said Committee, may be permitted to attend when they feel a concern so to do.

Supply vacancies.

When any vacancy occurs in the Representative Committee during the recess of the Yearly Meeting, by death or otherwise, the Quarterly meeting within whose limits such vacancy happens, ought to take early care to supply it by a new appointment. (1834.)

MEETINGS FOR WORSHIP.

DEAR Friends, keep all your meetings in the authority, wisdom, and power of Truth, and unity of the blessed Spirit; and the God of peace be with you. And it is advised, that such as come late to meetings, or when there fall asleep, or are restless, or do not stay in the meeting, but go forth unnecessarily, or otherwise demean themselves unbecoming our holy profession on those solemn occasions, be tenderly and seasonably admonished.

Unbecoming behaviour in meetings requires admonition.

We exhort all to a Christian exercise and zeal in the performance of worship to Almighty God; and as we are not capable in our own strength to perform this great duty, we recommend to a diligent waiting in true silence and retirement of mind, for the renewed sense of the inward power and virtue of his Spirit, whereby we shall be qualified to worship him in an acceptable manner. Let our faithfulness and sincerity herein appear, by the humility, meekness and circumspection of our lives and conversation, adorning the doctrines and principles of Truth, as they were declared by Christ and his apostles: those who have been preserved in faithfulness therein, having to testify from that experience which cannot deceive,

Zeal in performance of divine worship recommended

that it hath been very profitable; and therefore cannot be easy without encouraging and putting forward their children, apprentices and servants to this religious duty, as well as other behaviour suitable thereunto. And if this useful practice was more generally attended to, it would do more for us and them than any outward acquisition of wealth; and without doubt, some of those who have been placed under our direction, may with thankfulness have to view our pious care in taking them from worldly business to seek a city eternal in the heavens.

Wilful neglect of meetings cause of disownment.

This Meeting recommends, that Friends who are exercised in the discipline would early extend their love and care, in visiting such amongst us who neglect their duty in attending our meetings for public worship. And as a wilful neglect of this important duty is a manifest evidence of ingratitude to the Divine Being, contrary to the example and practice of the primitive believers in Christ, and our religious testimony; it is the sense of this Meeting, that as such who are thus insensible of their religious duty, disunite themselves from Christian fellowship with Friends, monthly meetings, after having fully discharged their duty towards them, and finding their endeavours to reclaim them ineffectual, should testify our disunion with them.

Drowsi-

As the minds of many are turned towards

Friends, and the appearance of a drowsy spirit in our religious meetings, is offensive, and may be a cause of stumbling to sober inquirers, it is earnestly desired that this weakness may not exist among us. And as indulgence therein must necessarily have a disqualifying effect, it is the sense and judgment of this Meeting, that Quarterly, monthly, and other meetings should be cautious of employing such members in the weighty services of the discipline.

ness in meetings offensive.

Caution against employing such in the services of discipline

MEMORIALS.

If any monthly meeting should, under solid consideration, believe it necessary to prepare a memorial concerning any deceased Friend who had been a member thereof, it is to go to the respective Quarterly meeting; where, being duly weighed and agreed to, it is then to be forwarded to the meeting for sufferings, for inspection and approbation, previous to its being laid before this Meeting

MINISTERS AND ELDERS, AND MEETINGS OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

Care in love and tenderness to those young in the ministry.

It is our earnest desire, that both ministers and elders may be as nursing fathers and mothers to those that are young in the ministry, and with all care and diligence advise and admonish them; and if they see occasion, reprove them in a tender and Christian spirit, according to the rules of our discipline and counsel of Friends in that respect; also exhort them frequently to read the holy scriptures, and earnestly seek the mind of the Spirit of truth, to open the mysteries thereof; that, abiding in a simple and patient submission to the will of God, and keeping down to the openings of Divine love and life in themselves, they may witness a gradual growth in their gifts, and be preserved from extending their declarations further than they find the life and power of Truth to bear them up.

Ministers misapplying or drawing unsound inferences from the scriptures, or for misbehaviour, to

And our advice to all our ministers is, that they be frequent in reading the scriptures of the old and new testaments: and if any in the course of their ministry shall misapply, or draw unsound inferences or wrong conclusions from the text, or shall misbehave themselves in point of conduct or conversation, let them be

admonished in love and tenderness by the elders or overseers where they live, and if they prove refractory and refuse to acknowledge their faults, let them be further dealt with, in the wisdom of Truth, as the case may require.

be admonished.

As the occasion of our religious meetings is solemn, a care should ever be maintained to guard against any thing that would tend to disorder or confusion therein. When any think they have aught against what is publicly delivered, they should speak to the party privately and orderly; and, if any shall oppose a ministering Friend in his or her preaching or exhortation, or keep on the hat, or show any remarkable dislike to such when engaged in prayer, let them be speedily admonished in such manner as may be requisite; unless the person against whom the uneasiness is expressed has been disowned by a monthly meeting, or his or her public appearances disapproved by the elders.

Order in meetings.

Public opposition to ministers in unity requires speedy admonition.

This Meeting agrees, that each monthly meeting choose two or more Friends of each sex to sit with the ministers, and they together to compose a meeting to be denominated a preparative meeting of ministers and elders; taking care that the Friends chosen for that service be prudent, solid Friends, and that they do carefully discharge the trust confided to them.

Elders to be chosen.

Mode of appointing elders.

When there is occasion for the appointment of one or more elders in any meeting, the proposal of separating a committee to consider the subject, should be first made in a monthly meeting, and when there united with, a proper number of suitable Friends should be appointed. And in this committee, the names of the persons who may be thought suitable should be first mentioned, and, when concurred with, reported to the monthly meeting, without consulting the person or persons, or otherwise divulging it. If upon due consideration the nomination is approved, a minute should be made, and a copy thereof forwarded to the Quarterly meeting of ministers and elders.

Elders may be removed when they lose their service.

The discipline never was intended to deprive monthly meetings of the liberty to remove elders from their station, at any time when such meetings might believe they had lost their service by unfaithfulness or otherwise. (1829.)

Committee to be appointed once in four years.

It is recommended to our monthly meetings, that a committee be appointed at least once in four years, and as much oftener as the occasion may require, to consider the propriety of changing the elders, and of bringing forward well qualified Friends to fill that station. (1829.)

Committee once in four years.

The Meeting united in the conclusion, that a committee shall be appointed once in four

years, or oftener if required, to consider the propriety of changing the elders, without enjoining it on monthly meetings to make any change, unless it is deemed necessary. It being distinctly understood, that whether any change is made or not, the committee shall bring the names to the monthly meeting for its judgment; and that the information of said appointments be transmitted by minute to the Quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, as already required by the discipline. (1836.)

Names to the monthly meeting.

Quarterly meeting of ministers and elders informed.

When any Friend has frequently appeared in our religious meetings as a minister, and the preparative meeting of ministers and elders apprehends that it is seasonable the subject should claim the attention of the monthly meeting for discipline, of which the person is a member, they are at liberty to mention the matter therein; and if the monthly meeting, after deliberate consideration, should unite in believing that a gift in the ministry has been committed to him or her, a minute expressive thereof should be forwarded to the Quarterly meeting of ministers and elders, where, the case being solidly weighed, and the sense of the monthly meeting concurred with, information thereof should be sent to the preparative meeting of ministers and elders of which the party is to be a member. And until the approbation of the Quarterly meeting of ministers and elders is obtained, no such Friend is to be

Manner in which ministers are to be recommended.

received as a minister, nor permitted to sit in the meetings of ministers and elders, nor travel abroad as a minister. And no such approved minister is to appoint any meeting out of the limits of the Quarterly meeting to which he or she belongs, without a certificate from the monthly meeting for discipline, or the concurrence thereof.

Not to appoint meetings out of the Quarterly meeting without certificates.

Elders appearing as ministers.

It is the judgment of this Meeting, that when any Friend appointed to the station of an elder believes him or herself called to the ministry, and shall have appeared frequently in that capacity in our public religious meetings, they should withdraw from the meetings of ministers and elders.

Ministers concerned to travel are to apply for minutes.

Agreed, that when an approved minister believes it right to pay a religious visit beyond the limits of the Quarterly meeting to which he or she belongs, the concern be opened in both the men's and women's monthly meetings, for their consideration and judgment; and if approved, the certificate or minute to be signed by the clerks of the men's and women's meetings. And when the prospect is of such an extent as to require the approbation of the Quarterly meeting, the like proceedings take place therein. (1837.) And it is advised, that when the service is accomplished, the said meetings be informed thereof, and the certificate returned without unnecessary delay.

And return them seasonably.

Agreed, that when any Friend is religiously concerned to make a visit to the meetings of Friends beyond the limits of this Yearly Meeting, and has obtained a certificate for that purpose from the monthly meeting of which he or she is a member, that the concern be also laid before the respective Quarterly meeting for its concurrence and endorsement, to be signed by the clerks of the men's and women's meetings. But if the concern be only to attend one of the Yearly Meetings on this continent, and to take such meetings as may be on the way thither, or on the return from thence, or to visit the meetings within one or two Quarterly meetings adjacent to the limits of this Yearly Meeting, and which belong either to the Yearly Meeting of New York or Maryland, the concurrence of the monthly meeting therewith, signified by their certificate or minute, will be sufficient. (1812. 1837.)

Religious visits beyond the limits of the Yearly Meeting.

If the concern is to make a religious visit beyond sea, the certificate should be signed by the men's and women's monthly meetings generally, and then go forward to superior meetings for concurrence. (1837.)

Religious visits beyond sea.

It is recommended, that when the concern of a Friend for the performance of a religious visit to meetings within the limits of this Yearly Meeting, is united with by the monthly meeting of which he or she is a member, that

Means to defray the expenses of religious visits.

the said monthly meeting do carefully examine, and see that the service may not be impeded, or the individual improperly burdened, for want of requisite means to defray the expenses of such a journey. And where the concern extends beyond the limits of this Yearly Meeting, the like care should weightily rest upon, and be attended to by the Quarterly meeting to which the Friend belongs. (1809.)

Expenses of visits beyond sea.

When any Friend is drawn to make a religious visit beyond sea, and the concern is united with in the respective meetings, according to the mode prescribed by the discipline, such committee as the Yearly Meeting may appoint for the purpose, should take care for the assistance of the individual when needful, and to appropriate so much of the stock of the Meeting, as they may judge proper, for payment of the expenses incurred in the performance of the service. (1809.)

Preparative meeting of ministers and elders.

The ministers and elders of each monthly meeting are to meet once in three months at such time and place as the monthly meeting may direct, in the capacity of a preparative meeting of ministers and elders; when, after a time of solid retirement, the queries addressed to such meetings are to be read and considered, and distinct answers made to them in writing; which, when signed by the clerk, are to be conveyed to the ensuing Quarterly

meeting of ministers and elders by two or more Friends to be mentioned in the report as representatives. But if, in the course of inquiry, any deficiency has appeared, care should be taken that it be remedied.

Quarterly meeting of ministers and elders.

And in the said Quarterly meetings, the queries are also to be read with the answers which are brought from their preparative meetings, and the state of the members weightily considered; that where occasion requires it, advice and counsel may be seasonably extended: and once a year those answers, comprised in a written report and signed by the clerk, are to be forwarded to the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders, by four or more Friends appointed as representatives.

Yearly meeting of ministers and elders.

In this Meeting, the queries are also to be read with the answers from the several Quarters, and the state of this part of the Society being collected and considered, advices adapted thereto may, if requisite, be issued to the subordinate meetings of the like kind.

Certificates for services beyond sea.

And such ministers as propose to go in Truth's service beyond sea, after obtaining a certificate of the concurrence of the monthly meeting, endorsed by the respective Quarter, are to spread their concerns before the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders, and produce the said certificates; and if, upon solid consideration, the same are united with, a certificate thereof signed by the clerk, should be granted.

Not to interfere with meetings for discipline.

None of the said meetings of ministers and elders are in any wise to interfere with the business of any meeting for discipline; nor is the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders to suffer its adjournments to interfere with the sittings of the Yearly Meeting for discipline.

Watch over the flock.

We tenderly recommend faithful Friends, and especially ministers and elders, to watch over the flock of Christ in their respective places and stations, always approving themselves by their pious examples in conversation and conduct, to be such as faithfully and diligently walk up to the testimony of the blessed Truth, whereunto the Lord hath gathered us in this his gospel day.

Treatment of those who lose their services.

And if any acknowledged member of our meetings of ministers and elders shall at any time be thought, by negligence, unfaithfulness, or otherwise, to have lost his or her service in that station, so as to become the subject of uneasiness and burdensome, (yet not so as to be under the care of a meeting of discipline on that account, or for misconduct,) it is advised, that a timely and tender care be extended to such person according to gospel order; first by the individuals concerned, and then by the preparative meeting of ministers and elders to which he or she may belong: should these labours prove unavailing, report of the case should be made by that meeting to the Quar-

terly meeting of ministers and elders, and there a few Friends be deputed to assist the said preparative meeting in a further extension of labour with the party: if this also prove unavailing, and on report thereof to the said Quarterly meeting, it appears that the said preparative meeting has fully discharged its duty to the individual, the case should then be transmitted to the monthly meeting for discipline of which the party is a member, and left under its care; and he or she ought from that time to refrain from attending any such select meetings until they shall be again recommended or appointed as at first.

MODERATION AND TEMPERANCE.

Idle company, strong drink, &c

ADVISED, that none accustom themselves to vain and idle company, sipping and tippling of drams and strong drink; for though such who use that evil practice may not suddenly become drunken to the greatest degree, yet they often thereby become like ground fitted for the seeds of the greatest transgressions; and some who have had the good example of virtuous parents, have from small beginnings arrived to a shameful excess, to their ruin, the great

Strong liquors at vendues.

injury of their families, and the scandal of the religious profession they have made.

It having been observed that a pernicious custom has prevailed upon people, of giving rum and other strong liquors to excite some to bid at vendues to advance the price, which, besides the injustice of the artifice, is scandalous, and leads to intemperance and disorder; it is therefore the unanimous sense of this Meeting to caution Friends against the same. And if any under our profession do fall into this evil practice, by giving or taking strong liquors at vendues, or countenance or promote any noisy gatherings, they should be speedily dealt with as disorderly persons, and if they cannot be brought to a sense of their error, disowned.

Importing and retailing spirituous liquors.

Many just and pertinent remarks being made in this Meeting, clearly setting forth the corrupting, debasing, and ruinous effects, consequent on the importation and retailing large quantities of distilled spirits, whereby the intemperate use of them is greatly aided and encouraged, to the impoverishment of many, distempering the constitutions and understandings of many more, and increasing vice and dissoluteness in the land, wherewith many religiously attentive minds have been long painfully burdened; it is the united sense of the Meeting, that well-concerned Friends in all quar-

ters, be earnestly excited to suffer the affecting importance of this mighty evil, religiously to impress their minds, and animate them with a lively concern to excite honest endeavours, both by example and loving entreaty, to caution and dissuade all our members from being concerned in the importation or retailing distilled spirits, or giving countenance thereto.

Moderation at marriages, &c.

It is affectionately recommended, that Friends be careful to use moderation on account of marriages, births and burials, and on all other occasions; a departure from which being a cause of stumbling to many, and a great obstruction to a more full reformation, as well as attended with other evil consequences, tending to obscure that light which we have to hold up to others, and should have more abundantly, if we were faithful; lessening that savour which we ought ever carefully to preserve, agreeably to the monition of the holy apostle, "Let your moderation be known unto all men, the Lord is at hand." Phil. iv. 5. And as the all-seeing eye beholds our thoughts, and views us in all our ways and actions, what manner of men ought we to be in all godliness of life, and sobriety of deportment!

Distilling and selling spirits.

And if any should distil spirits, or sell such liquors, monthly meetings should deal with them as with other offenders, and if they cannot be prevailed with to desist from such a

practice, be at liberty to declare their disunity with them. (1832.)

Monthly meetings to treat with distillers, &c.

Monthly meetings ought to take an early opportunity, tenderly to treat with such of our members as are concerned, either in the *importation*, *distillation* or *sale* of spirituous liquors. And if, after faithful, patient labour to convince them of the awful, demoralizing effects of their conduct, and its inconsistency with the testimony of our religious society, they cannot be prevailed upon to relinquish the business, the said meetings be at liberty to put the discipline in practice against them. (1832.)

Liquors as a drink.

A tender, religious care ought to be extended to such of our members as are in the use of spirituous liquors *as a drink*, or handing it out in harvest, or at other times, in order to dissuade them from the practice. (1832.)

Renting property, &c.

Friends are also tenderly advised, to abstain from renting their property or furnishing any materials whereby our testimony against spirituous liquors, as a drink, will be violated. (1841.)

NEGROES OR SLAVES.

Testimony against slavery and the slave trade.

It appears to have been the concern of this Meeting, revived from time to time with increasing weight, to testify their entire disunity with the practice of enslaving mankind, (and particularly to guard all in membership with us against being concerned in the purchase of slaves from the coasts of Africa,) yet as we have with sorrow to observe, that in some parts of our country this shameful practice is still continued and connived at, we think it proper to revive the advices heretofore issued, and again exhort our members to be no way accessory to this enormous national evil, but to discourage it by all the justifiable means in their power; it being obvious, that wherever it prevails it tends to corrupt the morals of the people, so as not only to render them obnoxious to the displeasure of the Almighty, but deaf to his warnings, and insensible and regardless of his impending judgments.

This oppressed class to be instructed, advised and assisted.

And we earnestly desire it may become the concern of our members generally, to use the influence they have with those who hold slaves by inheritance or otherwise, that they may be treated with moderation and kindness, and instructed as objects of the common salvation in

the principles of the Christian religion; as well as in such branches of school-learning as may fit them for freedom, and to become useful members of civil society. Also that Friends in their several neighbourhoods advise and assist such of the black people as are at liberty, in the education of their children, and common worldly concerns.

Hiring slaves.

Understanding that some in membership with us, either through inadvertence or from selfish motives, have hired slaves to assist them in their business; we desire such to consider, that in so doing they promote the unrighteous traffic and oppose our testimony against it. And it is our sense, that when slaves are thus hired, and the price of their services is intended for the benefit of those who claim the right of ownership, and not designed or applied to promote the liberation of the slave or slaves, such conduct is a violation of our testimony. And where any among us cannot be persuaded to relinquish the practice, monthly meetings be at liberty, after patient labour has been found unavailing, to testify their disunity with them.

Caution to executors and administrators

Friends are also cautioned against acting as executors or administrators to estates where slaves are bequeathed; and doing any thing whereby their bondage may be prolonged.

We are united in judgment, that the state

of the black people who have been held as slaves by any of us or our predecessors, calls for a deep inquiry and close examination, how far we are clear of withholding from them what under such an exercise may be opened to our view as their just right; and we earnestly and affectionately entreat those in particular who have released any of them, to attend to the further openings of duty. Even if no such obligations to this people existed among us, it is worthy of our serious consideration, whether any object of beneficence is more deserving of our regard, than that of training up their youth in such virtuous principles and habits, as may render them useful and respectable members of the community. Kindness to them.

It is the sense and judgment of this Meeting, that if any of our members are concerned in importing, selling, or purchasing; or shall give away or transfer any negro or other slave, with or without any other consideration than to clear their estate of any future incumbrance, or in such manner that their bondage is continued beyond the time limited by law or custom for white persons; and also those who accept of such gift or assignment;—they ought to be speedily treated with in the spirit of true love and wisdom, and the iniquity of their conduct laid before them. And if, after Christian labor, they cannot be brought to such a sense of their injustice, as to do every thing Importing, selling, purchasing, or giving away slaves.

which the monthly meeting shall judge to be reasonable and necessary, for the restoring such slave to his or her natural and just right to liberty, and condemn their deviation from the law of righteousness and equity, to the satisfaction of the said meeting, that such member or members be testified against as other transgressors are by the rules of our discipline for other immoral, unjust, or reproachful conduct.

The meeting for sufferings to discourage the slave trade.

It appearing that, notwithstanding the many afflictive dispensations with which Divine wisdom has seen meet to visit this land, many of its inhabitants are so deaf to the language of the rod, as to continue in the nefarious traffic for slaves to the coasts of Africa; and that the importation of them is still connived at: this Meeting, considering such a conduct as a bold and impious defiance of the Ruler of nations, and pregnant with the most alarming consequences to our country, earnestly recommends to the meeting for sufferings to embrace every suitable opportunity for advancing our testimony in this respect, and for calling the attention of the public mind to this awfully interesting subject.

OATHS.

ADVISED, that our Christian testimony be faithfully maintained against the burden and imposition of oaths, according to the express command of Christ and the injunction of the apostle James, viz. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths; but I say unto you, swear not at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black: but let your communication be, yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Mat. v. 33 to 37. Testimony founded on the command of Christ.

"But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea, be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation." James v. 12.

From the year 1718 to 1771, divers minutes of this Meeting appear, declaring that oaths administered by clerks or others under the Parties to the administration of oaths.

notice and connivance of Friends, either in court or elsewhere, violate our ancient testimony. And it is earnestly recommended to Quarterly and monthly meetings, that where any under our name are parties to the administration of oaths, to be careful to proceed in dealing with them; and if they will not decline the practice and give suitable satisfaction to the meeting they belong to, to testify against them agreeably to the rules of our discipline.

Deviation cause of disownment.

As it is our duty to support our Christian testimony against oaths, faithful Friends are desired to extend labor in love towards those who deviate therefrom; and if such labor proves unsuccessful, monthly meetings should testify their disunity with them.

And Friends in all places are exhorted, carefully to avoid electing or promoting their brethren to such stations in civil government as may subject them to the temptation of violating this testimony: and where any members show an inclination or desire of soliciting or accepting of such offices, timely care should be taken to caution them against it. And in the execution of instruments of writing requiring witnesses, it is recommended that Friends endeavor to procure such persons for this purpose, as will attest the same by affirmation.

Witnesses.

OVERSEERS.

It is recommended, that in every monthly meeting a proper number of faithful and judicious men and women belonging to each of the particular or preparative meetings, be appointed to the station of overseers within the same: whose duty it is to exercise a vigilant and tender care over their fellow-members; that if any thing repugnant to the harmony and good order of the Society appears among them, it may be timely attended to and not neglected. And to prevent the introduction of all unnecessary and premature complaints to meetings of business, it is advised, if any member shall have cause of complaint against another, that it be mentioned to the overseers; who are to see that the party complained of has been treated with according to gospel order, previously to the case being reported to the preparative or monthly meeting. And it is desired that in dealing with any, it be done in the spirit of meekness and love, patiently endeavoring to instruct and advise them; which, if ineffectual, the preparative meeting should be informed thereof; that, if needful, the case may be laid before the monthly meeting, of which, notice should be given to the party when it can be conveniently done.

Appointment.

Their duty.

To be performed in a Christian spirit

Committee once in three years.

It is further recommended to our monthly meetings, that a committee be appointed at least once in three years, or as much oftener as the occasion may require, to consider the propriety of changing the overseers, and bringing forward in the improvement of their gifts, other Friends on whom a concern for the welfare of the Society rests.

Serious exhortation.

And we tenderly exhort all our members who may be rightly called into this or any other service of the church, not hastily to excuse themselves therefrom, but solidly to ponder the weighty advice of the apostle, "Feed the flock of God, which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock: and when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

The rising generation exhorted to avoid ensnaring corruptions.

In much love to the rising generation, we exhort them to avoid the many vanities and ensnaring corruptions to which they are exposed. Bear in mind, dear youth, that "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;" and that "a good understanding have all they who do his commandments." Psalm cxi. 10. Take the advice of godly parents, guardians and friends; ever remembering that, next to our Creator, children ought to obey their parents, and that disobedience to them is a breach of the moral law, and was always offensive in the Divine sight. Submit to their reasonable requirings with cheerfulness, though these may sometimes thwart your own inclinations, and answer them not frowardly or crossly. They watched over you and took care of you, when you were utterly unable to help or take care of yourselves. Why then should any of you grieve or wound their still anxious minds by a conduct which, because of its tendency to obstruct your welfare and happiness, you know they cannot approve? Such as running into vain and expensive fashions; associating with corrupt and libertine persons; frequenting taverns and places of diversion; wasting your precious time in idle discourse,

and drawing the affections and inflaming the passions one of another: all which we have no doubt the divine Monitor in your own breasts often pleads with you against, and shows to be destructive of your peace. We beseech you, as fathers and mothers, to attend to this heavenly Instructor, and dutifully yield to the correspondent tender advice of your friends. Shrink not from the cross of Christ in your garb, language or manners; but through a subjection of your wills to the Divine will in these and all other respects, walk answerably to the purity of our profession, and the simplicity and spirituality of our worship. So may you be instructive examples to serious inquirers after Truth; and not of those who, under a profession thereof, are preferring their own crooked ways, and turning others aside from the footsteps of its followers.

Obstinate youth.

It is advised, that where the pious exercise of parental care and authority is disregarded, and any of the youth in membership with us, appear obstinately determined to run into and copy after the vain and extravagant fashions of the world in their dress and address, exposing themselves to the corrupting influence of evil company and excesses, whereby designing persons may entangle their affections, and draw them into unsuitable and unhappy connections in marriage or otherwise,—that such be timely and tenderly treated with, and shown

the dangerous tendency of their conduct: and if they cannot be prevailed with to desist therefrom and amend their ways, they ought to be dealt with by their respective preparative or monthly meetings, as in other cases of offence; and if, after due expostulation and forbearance, they prove irreclaimable, they may be testified against. Treated with.

And if any parents in membership with us, willingly indulge their children or youth under their care in such extravagance, liberties and excesses, as are here pointed out, and persist in vindicating their conduct, they ought in like manner to be treated with and disowned. Parents indulging children in excesses.

Friends are advised to bring up their children to habits of industry, placing them with sober and exemplary members of the Society, for instruction in such occupations as are consistent with our religious principles and testimonies, that as far as in us lies they may be preserved in a becoming conduct and demeanor. Children placed among Friends.

And it is desired, that those whose circumstances may furnish with ability for instructing in useful and suitable employments, the children of members who are in situations less affluent, may receive them into their families upon terms so moderate and equitable, as to remove every plausible reason for placing them with those not in membership with us. Children to be taken on moderate terms.

PLAINNESS.

Corrupt manners and fashions to be avoided.

ADVISED, that all Friends both old and young keep out of the world's corrupt language, manners, vain and needless things and fashions, in apparel, buildings, and furniture of houses; some of which are immodest, indecent, and unbecoming. And that they avoid immoderation in the use of lawful things, which though innocent in themselves may thereby become hurtful; also such kinds of stuffs, colors and dress, as are calculated more to please a vain and wanton mind than for real usefulness. And let tradesmen and others, members of our religious Society, be admonished that they be not accessory to these evils; for we ought to take up our daily cross, minding the grace of God which brings salvation, and teaches to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, that we may adorn the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in all things; so may we feel his blessing, and be instrumental in his hand for the good of others.

Caution to tradesmen and others.

Simplicity recommended.

We tenderly exhort all, seriously to consider the plainness and simplicity which the gospel enjoins, and to manifest it in their

speech, apparel, furniture, salutations and conversations; into which our forefathers were led by the Spirit of Christ, in conformity with his precepts and example; and for which they patiently suffered long imprisonments and great persecutions; being convinced that it was their duty thus to bear a testimony against the vain spirit of the world.

Truth leads to plainness.

The spirit of Truth, which led our ancients to lay aside every thing unbecoming the followers of Christ, still leads in the same path, all who submit to its guidance; we therefore earnestly entreat all Friends to watch over themselves in this respect. The example of our blessed Saviour, his immediate followers, and of virtuous and holy men in all ages, ought to make a due impression on every considerate mind; and especially on such as have had the advantage of a guarded education.

Plainness of speech without respect of persons.

We also tenderly advise, that Friends take heed, especially those who should be exemplary to others under their care, that they exercise plainness of speech without respect of persons, in all their converse among men; and not balk their testimony by a cowardly compliance, varying their language according to their company;—a practice of very ill example, rendering those who use it contemptible, and looked upon as a kind of hypocrites, even by those

with whom they so comply. This seems to be cautioned against by the apostle, when he advises, 1 Tim., "That the deacons be grave, not double tongued;" plainly importing that it is inconsistent with the gravity of the gospel.

POOR.

Advice and assistance to be afforded.

It is advised, that the cases of all our members who are in indigent circumstances be duly inspected, that advice and relief may be seasonably extended, and assistance afforded to them in such business as they are capable of. And in order to defray the expenses which their support and the education of their children will necessarily occasion, it is recommended to each monthly meeting of men and women Friends, to be open-hearted and liberal in subscriptions for raising and continuing funds for these purposes;—that the meetings of each sex should appoint a treasurer to receive the same, and a committee of suitable Friends to have the particular care of the poor; whose business it will be to visit, inspect into their wants, and relieve them. And in the exercise of this benevolent care, it is desired we may always guard against exposing the names or

Funds to be raised.

Treasurer appointed and account settled.

situations of our fellow-members. And an appointment should be annually made of two or more Friends for settling the treasurer's account, and reporting its state to the meeting.

Situations of our fellow-members not exposed.

PRIESTS' WAGES, OR HIRELING MINISTRY.

Gospel ministry without reward from man.

LET us keep in remembrance, that it is under the immediate teaching and influence of the holy Spirit that all acceptable worship is performed, and all true gospel ministry supplied; that this pure and powerful influence, in vessels sanctified and prepared by the Divine hand, is the essential qualification to that work; and that, as the gift is Divine, the service is freely and faithfully to be discharged, without any view to reward from man.

Support of a hireling ministry testified against.

And it is advised, that where any of our members are so regardless of this testimony as to contribute to the support of an hireling ministry, and vindicate such conduct, that they be tenderly labored with to convince them of their error; but if this prove ineffectual, and they persist in their unfaithfulness, the monthly meetings to which they belong

should proceed to declare our disunity with them: such conduct being opposed to our testimony for the free ministry of the gospel, which is, "without money and without price."

Attending worship of others.

And it is further advised, that Friends be careful themselves, and discourage their children from attending the worship of those who are not in communion with us. (1841.)

QUERIES.

All answered once a year.

It is agreed that the nine queries belonging to meetings for discipline, be read, deliberately considered, and answered in each preparative and monthly meeting once a year; in order to convey an explicit account in writing to the Quarterly meetings next preceding the Yearly Meeting; that so this Meeting may be clearly informed of the state of all our meetings.

When first, second, and eighth are to be answered.

Also, that the first, second and eighth of those queries be read, considered, and explicit answers to them made in writing in the two Quarterly meetings preceding the one before mentioned, and also in the preparative and

monthly meetings which report thereto. But none of the queries are to be read or answered in those Quarterly meetings for discipline which immediately succeed the Yearly Meeting, nor in the preparative or monthly meetings which report to those Quarters.

When not to be read

It is not considered as obligatory on any meeting to read the above queries oftener than is here mentioned, or to read any others than such as are to be answered. Nor is the reading and answering of them enjoined on any preparative meeting, where the members of that and the monthly meeting are the same.

Advices and caution to be read once a year.

It is further agreed, that at the time when the nine queries are read in the preparative and monthly meetings, the advices and caution subjoined shall be also distinctly read and solidly pondered; as a means of putting the members present upon considering, whether there be any occasion for an extension of care in those respects: and, if there is, of stirring them up to a faithful discharge of their duty as individuals, one towards another.

First Query. Are all our religious meetings for worship and discipline duly attended; is the hour observed; and are Friends clear of sleeping, and of all other unbecoming behavior therein?

Second Query. Are love and unity maintained amongst you? Are tale-bearing and detraction discouraged? And where any differences arise, are endeavors used speedily to end them?

Third Query. Are Friends careful to bring up those under their direction, in plainness of speech, behavior, and apparel; in frequent reading the holy scriptures; and to restrain them from reading pernicious books, and from the corrupt conversation of the world?

Fourth Query. Are Friends clear of the manufacture and sale of all intoxicating beverages; are they careful to discourage their use as a drink; and is due caution observed in the use thereof as a medicine? Are they careful to discourage the attending of places of diversion, and the unnecessary frequenting of taverns? And do they keep to true moderation and temperance on account of marriages, burials and other occasions?—1873.

Fifth Query. Are poor Friends' necessities duly inspected, and they relieved or assisted in such business as they are capable of? Do their children freely partake of learning to fit them for business; and are they and other Friends' children placed among Friends?

Sixth Query. Do you maintain a faithful testimony against oaths; an hireling ministry; bearing arms, training, and other military ser-

vices; being concerned in any fraudulent or clandestine trade; buying or vending goods so imported, or prize goods; and against encouraging lotteries of any kind?

Seventh Query. Are Friends careful to live within the bounds of their circumstances, and to keep to moderation in their trade or business; are they punctual to their promises, and just in the payment of their debts; and are such as give reasonable grounds for fear on these accounts, timely labored with for their preservation or recovery?

Eighth Query. Do you take due care regularly to deal with all offenders in the spirit of meekness, without partiality or unnecessary delay, in order for their help; and where such labor is ineffectual, to place judgment upon them in the authority of Truth?

Ninth Query. Is due care taken to keep a regular record of births and deaths?

Advices.

And in the preparative and monthly meetings, when all the foregoing queries are read and answered, the following advices are to be read with a suitable pause between them:

On marriages.

As suitable marriage connections tend to the promotion of our happiness and comfort in life, it is affectionately advised, that when any of our members are about to marry, they seek

for Divine counsel and direction therein; and that their parents or guardians be early acquainted with their intentions. And it is recommended that marriages be accomplished decently, gravely, and weightily; that moderation be observed, and that no cause of reproach occur; but that all behave with such sobriety as becomes a people fearing God. (1842.)

Gifts and legacies.

That all public gifts and legacies be strictly applied to the uses intended by the donors; or, if any unforeseen occurrence should render such compliance difficult or impracticable, that an early application be made to the meeting for sufferings for its advice or assistance; and that timely care be taken for the renewal of trusts.

Certificates.

That Friends intending removal be careful to apply for certificates; and that the cases of such who remove without certificates, or of sojourners coming from other places and appearing as Friends, without producing certificates, be properly attended to.

Inspect affairs, wills, &c.

That Friends carefully inspect the state of their affairs once in the year; and make their wills and settle their outward estates whilst in health.

Conducting the

And it is further recommended, that in conducting the affairs of our meetings, Friends

endeavor to manage them in the peaceable spirit and wisdom of Jesus, with decency, forbearance and love of each other. affairs of meetings.

The following queries are also to be read, considered and answered, once a year, in each monthly and Quarterly meeting, and a report thereof made in writing to this Meeting: and it is recommended that in answering the query respecting schools, monthly meetings furnish their respective Quarters with particular accounts of the situation and circumstance of the several schools within their limits, and that the Quarterly meetings convey to this Meeting a summary statement thereof. Annual queries.

First Query. What changes have been made in the times or places of holding Friends' meetings; and what new meetings have been settled? (1836.)

Second Query. Are there schools established for the education of our youth, under the care of teachers in membership with us, and superintended by committees appointed either in the monthly or preparative meetings?

Third Query. Are the queries addressed to the Quarterly, monthly and preparative meetings, read and answered therein as directed?

QUERIES FOR MEETINGS OF MINISTERS AND ELDERS.

When to be answered.

It is also concluded, that of the following four queries, formed for the use of the meetings of ministers and elders, the first three be read and distinctly answered in writing three times in a year, by each preparative meeting of that kind, to its respective Quarterly meeting: and that all the said four queries shall be in like manner read and answered, by the preparative to their Quarterly meetings next preceding the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders; that the Quarterly meetings may be enabled to transmit a clear and distinct statement of those answers to that Meeting.

First Query. Are ministers and elders careful to attend meetings for Divine worship, bringing their families with them? Do they diligently attend meetings for discipline, encouraging such of their families to this duty as are of proper age, and suitable deportment?

Second Query. Are ministers sound in word and doctrine; careful to minister in the ability which God gives?

Third Query. Are the lives and conversa-

tion of ministers and elders clean and blameless amongst men? Are they in unity one with another, and with the meeting they belong to, harmoniously laboring for Truth's honor.

Fourth Query. Are they good examples in uprightness, temperance and moderation; and careful to train up their families in plainness of dress and simplicity of manners, becoming our religious profession?

Ministers and elders advised to watch over each other for good.

And it is earnestly and affectionately recommended, that ministers and elders watch over one another for good, to help those who are exercised in the ministry in the right line; discouraging forward spirits that run into words without life and power; advising against affectation of tones and gestures, and every thing that would hurt their service; yet encouraging the humble careful traveller; "speaking a word in season to them that are weary." And let all dwell in that which gives ability to labour successfully in the church of Christ, adorning the doctrine which they deliver to others; being examples of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, and in purity.

RESIGNATIONS.

When any member of our religious Society, who has not become an offender by violating any rule of Discipline, shall offer a resignation of their right of membership, it is advised, that the monthly meeting, if way opens, appoint a committee to visit such person in love, and inquire into the cause of their resignation; and if his or her mind continues unchanged, a minute may be made, stating that he or she is released at his or her request; of which the party should be informed; and such individual is not to be considered a member of our society, until received again according to our usual order. (1846.)

SECRET SOCIETIES.

Under a tender concern for the preservation of our members in that purity and simplicity which become our Christian profession, this Meeting is engaged solemnly to caution them, and especially the younger part of so ciety, against any connection with the societies

of "Free Masons," the associations calling themselves "Odd Fellows," or any others requiring of their members a pledge of *secrecy*. Many of these extract money from their members under the plausible pretence of benevolence; whilst they frequently draw them away from their families and business, into places and practices inimical to their best interests. Their convivial meetings, their vain, ostentatious processions, and high sounding titles, are corrupting in their tendency, and inconsistent with our religious profession. Friends are therefore earnestly and affectionately advised against becoming or continuing members of any such associations. Our Divine Master encouraged no *secret* societies. His disciples were to stand as a city set on a hill, which could *not be hid*. They were to let their light shine *before men*, that they, *seeing their good works*, might glorify our Father who is in heaven. Overseers, and other concerned Friends are advised to extend timely caution and admonition to all cases where any of our members have joined such societies, or may be in danger of thus being led astray by them. (1850.)

SCHOOLS.

Institution and support of schools.

THE education of our youth in piety and virtue, and giving them useful learning under the tuition of religious prudent persons, having for many years engaged the solid attention of this Meeting, and advices thereon having been from time to time issued to the several subordinate meetings; it is renewedly desired, that Quarterly, monthly and preparative meetings, may be excited to proper exertions for the institution and support of schools; there being but little doubt, that as Friends are united, and cherish a disposition of liberality for the assistance of each other in this important work, they will be enabled to make such provision for the accommodation and residence of a teacher, with a family, as would be an encouragement to well qualified persons to engage in this arduous employment: for want of which it has been observed, that children have been committed to the care of transient persons, of doubtful character, and sometimes of very corrupt minds, by whose bad example and influence, they have been betrayed into principles and habits which have had an injurious effect on them in more advanced life. It is therefore indispensably incumbent on us to guard them against this

Effects of the want of these under the care of Friends.

danger, and procure such tutors of our own religious persuasion, as are not only capable of instructing them in useful learning, to fit them for the business of this life, but to train them in the knowledge of their duty to God and one towards another. It is therefore proposed,

First. That a lot of ground be provided in each monthly or preparative meeting, sufficient for a garden, orchard, grass for a cow, &c. and a suitable house erected thereon. **House for a teacher.**

Second. That funds be raised by contribution, bequests, &c. in each meeting; the interest of which to be applied either in aid of the tutor's salary, or lessening the expense of Friends in straitened circumstances, in the education of their children. **Funds.**

Third. That a committee be appointed in each monthly or preparative meeting, to have the care of schools and the funds for their support, and that no tutor be employed but with their consent. **Committee.**

Although the raising a sufficiency to answer those purposes may in some places appear difficult, yet as improvements of this kind are generally gradual, and have often arisen from small beginnings into very valuable establishments, it is desired that Friends may be encouraged thereto, and keeping an eye to the **Encouraged to raise funds.**

Divine blessing on their benevolent endeavors, make such essay for carrying into effect these recommendations as they may be enabled.

The importance of training our children and youth in a knowledge of our principles being widely felt, Preparative and Monthly Meetings are authorized to encourage, and as way opens, extend a guarded care over the First-day Schools within their limits. (1886.)

SCRIPTURES OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

We tenderly and earnestly advise and exhort all parents and heads of families, that they endeavor to instruct their children and families in the doctrines and precepts of the Christian religion, as contained in the scriptures; and that they excite them to the diligent reading of those excellent writings, which plainly set forth the miraculous conception, birth, holy life, wonderful works, blessed example, meritorious death, and glorious resurrection, ascension and mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and to educate their children in the belief of those important truths, as well as in the belief of the inward manifestation and operation of the holy Spirit on their own minds, that they may reap the benefit and advantage thereof, for their own peace and everlasting happiness; which is infinitely preferable to all other considerations.

STOCK.

Agreed, that there be collections brought in from each Quarterly, unto the next Yearly Meeting, for a Yearly Meeting stock, to defray the charges of the said Meeting, according to the several agreements made or hereafter to be made. (1695.)

A stock having been generally kept, and by experience found useful for the necessary occasions of the Society, it is agreed, that the same be occasionally renewed by a collection from each Quarter; and that it be continued in the hands of the treasurer appointed by this Meeting, and subject to be drawn out by its direction, or by the meeting for sufferings, as the exigencies of Society may require.

The sums which may be thought necessary, shall be raised by each Quarter, in the proportions which may be ascertained by this Meeting from time to time.

An arrangement of the quotas of the several Quarterly meetings, produced by a committee appointed for that purpose, was agreed to in 1847, as follows:

Philadelphia	$20	in every	$100.
Abington	14½	"	"
Bucks	14½	"	"
Concord	14½	"	"
Caln	2	"	"
Western	13½	"	"
Southern	2	"	"
Burlington	6	"	"
Haddonfield	5	"	"
Salem	7	"	"
Fishing Creek	1	"	"
(1880.)	$100		

TAVERNS.

Frequenting taverns and other places of public resort.

We think it necessary to caution, not only the youth but those of riper age, to avoid the unnecessary frequenting of taverns and other places of public resort; that they be not exposed to noisy company and unprofitable conversation; or betrayed into the use of strong liquors, by which so many have been corrupted both in principle and practice, to the ruin of themselves and their families. And if any are in danger on these accounts, it is desired that they may be timely and tenderly treated with in order to convince them of their danger.

Caution against.

Considering the temptations and snares which they are exposed to who keep houses

of public entertainment or beer-houses, the corrupting influence of many who resort to them, and its effects on the children and families so exposed; it is the judgment of this Meeting, that our members avoid engaging in such employments for a livelihood; and attend to the pointings of pure wisdom for that end.

keeping taverns.

That Friends are earnestly entreated, as far as their influence extends, to prevent the sale of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and not to sign applications to license inns or taverns for that purpose, and when any of our members do sign such applications, it shall be considered a violation of our Discipline. (1879.)

Signing petitions for license a violation of Discipline.

TESTIMONIES OF DENIAL, AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

It is the sense of this Meeting, that offenders inclining to make acknowledgment of their offences, do prepare the same in writing; and if, on consulting the overseers or other judicious Friends, the purport appears suitable to the occasion, and the situation of the party will admit of it, he or she may present it to the meeting in person, and stay till it is read; when, after time given for a solid pause, they

Acknowledgments to be in writing.

should withdraw before that or any other business is proceeded upon. The meeting is then to consider the case, and appoint two or more Friends to inform the party of the result.

Notice before issuing a testimony.

In all cases where a meeting apprehends itself under a necessity to disown a member, let such member, if the occasion and his or her situation will admit of it, be previously informed thereof: and when the judgment of the meeting is issued, let a copy thereof be delivered to the party testified against, with notification of his or her right of appeal.

TRADE.

Truth is safe in its guidance.

It being evident, that where the manifestations and restraints of the Spirit of truth are duly prized and regarded, it leads out of a bondage to the spirit of this world, and preserves the minds of its followers from many fettering and disqualifying entanglements; and contrariwise, that an inordinate love and pursuit of worldly riches, often betrays those who are captivated by them, into many difficulties and dangers, to the great obstruction of the work of Truth in the heart: we affectionately

Inordinate pursuit of riches involves in difficulty.

desire that the counsel and gracious promise of our blessed Redeemer to his followers, may be borne in remembrance by us, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."

Engagements to be within our means and strictly fulfilled.

This Meeting being earnestly concerned that the service of our religious Society may not be obstructed, or its reputation dishonored, by any imprudence of its members in their worldly engagements, recommends to all, that they be careful not to venture upon such business as they do not well understand; nor to launch out in trade beyond their abilities, and at the risk of others; especially on the credit which may be derived from a profession of the Truth; but that they bound their engagements by their means; and when they enter into contracts, or give their words, that they endeavor on all occasions strictly to fulfil them.

Hazardous enterprises to be avoided, and a moderate way of living kept to.

We particularly exhort that none engage in such concerns as depend on the often deceptive probabilities of hazardous enterprises; but rather content themselves with such a plain and moderate way of living as is consistent with the self-denying principle we make profession of; whereby many disappointments and grievous perplexities may be avoided, and that tranquillity of mind obtained which is inseparable from the right enjoyment even of temporal things. And it is advised, that where any

among us err, or are in danger of erring in these respects, they be faithfully and timely admonished.

Inspect affairs, and when needful.

It is recommended that Friends frequently inspect the state of their affairs, and keep their accounts so clear and accurate, that they may, at any time, easily know whether they live within the bounds of their circumstances, or not; and, in case of death, that these may not be perplexing to survivors. And whenever any find that they have no more property left than is sufficient to discharge their just debts, it is advised, that they immediately consult with some judicious Friends, and, without loss of time, make their circumstances known to their creditors; carefully avoiding the payment of one in preference to another, that so none may be injured, nor any reproach be incurred by mismanagement.

Consult Friends.

And avoid preferences.

Those likely to fail to be seasonably treated with.

And where overseers, or other concerned Friends, have reason to fear that any person or family, by living above their means, or from a want of punctuality in fulfilling their contracts, or any other cause, are declining in their circumstances, and likely to fail, it is recommended that such be seasonably treated with, and (if it appear requisite) advised to call their creditors together without delay. And if, notwithstanding this advice, such persons still persist and run into embarrassment,

to the loss of others and to their own disreputation, the preparative or monthly meeting to which they belong, ought to be timely informed thereof, and proceed to deal with them according to our rules; when, if this labor also prove ineffectual, a testimony of denial may be issued against them.

Assignees or trustees to be inquired of.

It is advised that where such failures occur, and the cases are under the care of monthly meetings, that the Friends appointed to visit the parties inquire of their assignees or trustees, how their deficiencies have happened, and report accordingly. And it is the judgment of this Meeting, that neither monthly nor other meetings should receive subscriptions, donations or bequests from persons so circumstanced, until they have paid off their deficiencies, or are voluntarily acquitted thereof by their creditors: for it should be remembered that though, in such cases, the defaulter may have been legally discharged, the property he or she may afterwards acquire is not properly his or her own, till the former debts have been fairly paid, to the satisfaction of the creditors. Wherefore we further advise, that if any such person or persons, on being suitably reminded of their duty in this respect, shall refuse to comply therewith, inquiry be made into the reason, and if it be not such as shall satisfy the monthly meetings of which they are members, and they cannot be prevailed with,—the

When subscriptions, &c. are not to be received.

When of ability to pay just debts.

Or be disowned.

said meetings, after a proper time of labor and forbearance, may issue a testimony of denial against them.

All cases of failure to be reported.

In order regularly to bring all cases of failure before preparative and monthly meetings for their care, and also, a provision more effectually to insure an impartial distribution of the effects of insolvents, the following rules were adopted. (1816.)

Overseers are to inquire into cases of failure and lay them before meetings.

When any member of our religious Society in trade or business becomes unable to discharge his or her debts, the overseers should take an early opportunity to ascertain the circumstances of the case, and spread the same before the preparative meeting, in order that it may be regularly forwarded to the monthly meeting: and if it shall appear that such failure has arisen from a want of due attention to the advices of this Meeting on the subject of trade and business, and has brought reproach on our religious profession, the monthly meeting shall be at liberty to issue a testimony of disownment. (1816.)

Creditors to be consulted and have liberty to appoint assignees.

And it is also the judgment of this Meeting, that when any of our members are about to assign their property, their creditors should be consulted, if practicable, and have the liberty of appointing assignees to take charge of the effects, which should be assigned without any

condition or reservation; and if the party do not so proceed, the case shall be treated as is directed in the preceding paragraph. (1816.)

Duties of assignees

Advised, that when Friends accept the office of trustee or assignee, they be active in collecting the effects of the estate, and punctual and speedy in making distribution.

Government not to be defrauded.

Advised, that Friends everywhere carefully avoid being anyway concerned in defrauding the government of its duties; that so our ancient testimony in this respect may be inviolably maintained.

Mere paper credit discouraged

We warn our members against a pernicious practice amongst the trading part of the community, which has often issued in the ruin of those concerning therein, viz.: That of raising and circulating a kind of paper credit, with endorsements, to give it an appearance of value, without an intrinsic reality; a practice which, as it appears to be inconsistent with the Truth we profess, we declare our disapprobation of, and entreat every member of our Society to avoid and discourage.

Joint securities cautioned against.

We also caution all in membership with us to avoid entering into joint securities with others, under the specious plea of rendering acts of kindness; many, by so doing, having been suddenly ruined, and their families re-

duced to deplorable circumstances. "Be not thou," said the wise man, "one of them that strike hands; or of them that are sureties for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take away thy bed from under thee?"

Divine counsel to be waited for.

We affectionately desire that Friends may wait for Divine counsel in all their engagements, and not suffer their minds to be hurried away by an inordinate desire of worldly riches; remembering the observation of the apostle in his day, and so often sorrowfully verified in ours, that "They who will be rich, fall into temptation and a snare;" and, erring from the faith, "pierce themselves through with many sorrows." Even when riches to any extraordinary degree have been amassed by the successful industry of parents, how often have they proved like wings to their children, carrying them beyond the limitations of Truth, into liberties repugnant to our religious testimonies, and sometimes into enterprises which have terminated in irreparable damage to their temporal affairs, if not an entire forgetfulness of the great work of the soul's salvation.

Dangers of great riches.

WAR.

Exhortation to a faithful maintenance of our testimonies.

FRIENDS are exhorted faithfully to adhere to our ancient testimony against wars and fightings, and in no way to unite with any in warlike measures, either offensive or defensive; that by the inoffensiveness of our conduct, we may convincingly demonstrate ourselves to be real subjects of the Messiah's peaceful reign, and be instrumental in the promotion thereof, towards its desired completion, when, according to ancient prophecy, "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea;" and its inhabitants "shall learn war no more."

Overplus of distraints not to be accepted unless in the same goods.

When goods have been distrained from any Friends on account of their refusal to pay fines for non-performance of military services, and the officers, after deducting the fines and costs, propose to return the remainder,—it is the sense of this Meeting, that Friends should maintain their testimony by suffering, rather than accept such overplus; unless the same or a part of it is returned without a change of the species.

Furnishing wagons a

It is declared to be the sense of this Meeting that furnishing wagons, or other means for

military service.

conveying military stores, is a military service; and that the care of elders, overseers and faithful Friends, should be extended in true love and Christian tenderness, to such as deviate herein, in order to convince them of their error.

Tax for drums, &c.

It is the sense of this Meeting, that a tax, levied for the purchasing of drums, colors, or for other warlike uses, cannot be paid consistently with our Christian testimony.

Viewing military operations or encouraging the unstable spirit of party advised against.

This Meeting fervently recommends to the deep attention of all our members, that they be religiously guarded against approving or showing the least connivance at war, either by attending at or viewing of military operations; or in any wise encouraging the unstable deceitful spirit of party, by joining with political devices or associations, however speciously disguised under the ensnaring subtleties commonly attendant thereon: but that they sincerely labor to experience a settlement on the alone sure foundation of pure unchangeable Truth; whereby, through the prevalence of unfeigned Christian love and good will to men, we may convincingly demonstrate that the kingdom we seek is not of this world. A kingdom and government whose subjects are free indeed! redeemed from those captivating lusts from whence come wars and fightings.

A living concern for the advancement of our

testimony to the peaceable kingdom of Christ, continuing to spread in many minds, a fervent desire hath prevailed amongst us, that the members of our religious Society would carefully avoid engaging in any trade or business promotive of war,—sharing or partaking of the spoils of war by purchasing or selling prize goods, importing or shipping goods in armed vessels, paying taxes for the express purpose of war, grinding of grain, feeding of cattle, or selling their property for the use of the army: that through a close attention to the monitions of Divine grace, and guarding against the suppression of it either in themselves or others, they may be preserved in a conduct consistent with our holy profession, from wounding the minds or increasing the sufferings of each other; not at all doubting, that He to whom appertains the kingdom and the power, who is wonderful in working, will continue to carry on and perfect his blessed cause of peace in the earth. A solid attention to this concern is recommended to Quarterly, monthly and preparative meetings, and to our brethren in general; it being the judgment of this Meeting, that if any of our members do either openly or by connivance pay any fine, penalty or tax in lieu of personal service for carrying on war, or allow their children, apprentices or servants to act therein, or are concerned in arming or equipping vessels with guns, or deal in public certificates issued as a compensation

Business connected with war to be avoided.

Payment of fines or taxes in lieu of personal service, arming vessels or trading in certificates issued for the purpose of war, cause of dealing.

for expenses accrued or services performed in war, that they be tenderly dealt with, and if they cannot be brought to an acknowledgment of their error, monthly meetings are at liberty to testify against them.

Military tax or fine not to be paid, however applied.

It is the sense and judgment of this Meeting, that it is inconsistent with our religious testimony and principle, for any Friend to pay a fine or tax, levied on them on account of their refusal to serve in the militia, although such fine or imposition may be applied towards defraying the expenses of civil government: and where deviations in this respect occur, tender dealing and advice should be extended to the party in order to their convincement and restoration; and if this proves ineffectual, monthly meetings should proceed to testify against them.

WILLS.

To be made in time of health.

KNOWING how quickly many are removed by death, it is weightily recommended, that care be taken by each monthly meeting, that Friends who have estates to dispose of, be advised to make their wills in time of health,

and strength of judgment; and therein to direct their substance as in justice and wisdom may be to their satisfaction and peace; laying aside all resentment, though occasion may have been given, lest it should go with them to the grave; remembering we all stand in need of mercy and forgiveness. Making such wills in due time can shorten no one's days, but the omission or delay thereof to a time of sickness, when the mind should not be diverted from a solemn consideration of the approaching awful period of life, has often proved very injurious to many, and been the occasion of creating animosities in families, which the seasonable performance of this necessary duty might have effectually prevented.

Laying aside all resentment.

Friends are earnestly recommended to employ persons skilful in the law, and of good repute, to make their wills; as great inconvenience and loss, and sometimes the ruin of families, have happened through the unskilfulness of some who have taken upon them to write wills, being unqualified to act in a matter of such importance. And all Friends who may become executors or administrators, are advised to make a full, clear and perfect inventory of the estate and effects of the deceased, early after the interment; as many difficulties and disputes have arisen, and sometimes injustice been done, for want of it, or by deferring it too long.

To be drawn by persons qualified therefor

Advice to executors and administrators.

YEARLY MEETING.

Account of its establishment and the times of holding it to the present year, (1856.)

It appears by the records, that our first Yearly Meeting was held at Burlington in New Jersey, the thirty-first day of the Sixth Month, 1681, O. S., for the provinces of Pennsylvania and New Jersey; that in 1685, it was agreed to be held alternately at Burlington and Philadelphia; that in 1755, the time of holding it was changed to the Ninth Month; that in 1760, it was concluded to be held at the same time at Philadelphia only; that in 1798, the time of holding it was altered to the third Second-day in the Fourth Month; that in 1827, the time of holding it was changed to the second Second-day of the Fourth Month; and in 1838, it was agreed to be held on the Second-day following the second First-day in the Fifth month, as it now is; the Yearly Meeting of ministers and elders to be on the

seventh day of the week preceding; and both to begin at the tenth hour.

It is agreed, that such Friends as may be appointed to prepare epistles shall meet together before they proceed on the service, and also examine the several essays previous to their being laid before this Meeting. Committee on epistles.

Agreed, that all letters or papers directed to the Yearly Meeting, except from such meetings as regularly correspond therewith, be first perused by a few Friends to be appointed; who are to consider and report, whether the same be proper to be read in this meeting or not. On official correspondence.

Agreed, that when extracts from the minutes of this Meeting are ordered to be sent to the Quarterly meetings, a full copy shall be sent by each of those meetings to their respective monthly meetings, and by the monthly to each of their preparative meetings, in order that each meeting may have a copy thereof, to have recourse to as occasions may require. Extracts.

The certificates of such Friends, members of other Yearly Meetings, who from a religious concern are drawn to attend this, are to be read herein. Certificates.

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